

NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR ALL

Arvinda Chandra
and
Anupama Shah

Written in the context of problems facing India, *Non-formal Education For All* is a book meant for college and university teachers, students, and voluntary organizations. In fifteen chapters, it describes the concept of non-formal education, its content, methods and planning, as well as evaluation. Also included are aspects of the psychology of non-formal learners. Reasons for the failure of non-formal education are analysed and the need for research stressed.

The book underlines the importance of the study of the community, on the one hand, and of non-formal learners and instructors, on the other. Models and programmes of non-formal education employed in Denmark are described.

The book shows how non-formal education can provide the answer to the problem of illiteracy in India. Lastly, the role of non-formal education in rural development is discussed.

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PREFACE

Non-formal education can be the greatest investment in India as some 65 per cent of illiterate and almost 100 per cent literate people could benefit from it. For the 65 per cent illiterates, non-formal education must first, comprise functional literacy.

The universities and voluntary organizations are responsible as well as privileged to start or strengthen the non-formal education. It is for the preparation of non-formal educators that the universities need a book like this. There is a dearth of Indian books on non-formal education, based on Indian needs, working conditions and resources. This book has been written by us as a result of our long experience of providing non-formal education to women. We have come across many similarities in needs, problems, and modalities of non-formal education imparted by our Colleagues in Faculties of Education, Social Work, Home Science and Agricultural Extension. It is these categories of Non-formal educators for whom we have prepared this book, as a result of our experiences. We hope the book will be found useful by them.

We sincerely thank Mr. T.P. Saxena, Retired Librarian, Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, for editing and suggesting several useful changes in the format of the book. His learned guidance has been an immense help in compiling the book. We also thank Ms. Dipti Shah, a young college student who typed the draft of the manuscript of this book.

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CONCEPT OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

"Did you read about the new road being built in our town?"

"No", was the reply of the person who did not know how to read.

How does an electric bulb light up? Why does it take such a short time to cook *dal* in a pressure cooker? What is the area of your room? What is the effect of insanitary living conditions on family health? The answers to these and to other similar questions of everyday life, cannot be given if the person is ignorant and not educated even in such simple things which one comes across every day. Ignorant people only breed further ignorance and poverty. It is learning of information, skills, and ideas that makes a person knowledgeable and, thus, a useful member of the society.

When a person has learnt some new information, skills, or attitudes which can be of use to him or her, it is known as being *educated*. Education is change in behaviour and improvement in abilities, when ignorance is changed into knowledge and awareness. The unskilled becomes skilled, and his values, appreciations and outlook on life also change in a more positive way. Education, meaning change in behaviour and attitudes, need not necessarily be through formal schooling; it can also be imparted in a *non-formal* setting. When education is imparted in a free atmosphere, without the rigidity of rules and regulations associated with school or college education, it is termed as non-formal education (NFE). The NFE is free of formal requirements, or at least, the formal requirements are not used in a binding or compulsive manner,

which would destroy the very concept of non-formal education. Non-formal education imparts depth and meaning to that work of the recipient which he is already doing, or wants to do, and thereby, can make him more efficient and, quite, likely, much more productive also.

Basic Meaning and Purpose

The basic purpose and meaning of non-formal education is the education for better living to be imparted outside the bureaucratic structure of the formal educational system. Although the basic aims of non-formal and formal education are the same, their approach is quite different. The non-formal approach to education can be described as the absence of a formal, and captive way of teaching and evaluating.

Non-formal education emphasizes *learning*. How does a person learn through the non-formal system? In the non-formal way of learning, observation, experimentation and participation are most important. The non-formal education aims at a minimum, or even total absence of academic learning, but maximum of practical and socially useful learning. Nevertheless, as the non-formal education of the present day has emerged from the formal education system, we need to use the context of formal education to explain the non-formal education. The traditional formal education has originated the erroneous belief that work and education cannot be combined. Human life is, therefore, divided into two stages : (1) all education and no work, and (2) all work and no education. But now, the educationists try to introduce work in formal education also. The internship, field-work, village work before granting a degree, and SUPW (socially useful productive work) in secondary schools, are examples of introducing work into the formal education system also.

In the non-formal education, it is not necessary to put work into education because most of the persons coming for non-formal education would already be working. Therefore, non-formal education is built around the work of the people who take up non-formal education. This trains them to earn better, or live better, or both. It enables the learner to increase his productivity in terms of output, and also to

improve the quality of the work in which he or she is already engaged.

Academic Objectives

Though the basic concept of non-formal education is simple, the educationists responsible for its operation have developed academic objectives for this form of education also. The non-formal learner may not need to achieve those academic objectives, but the academicians attach importance to them in non-formal programmes for education. The academicians have introduced such objectives not only to explain the concept of non-formal education, but also as a reminder of the dissimilarities in formal and non-formal education. Some of the academic objectives of the NFE are described below :

To educate the dropouts from formal education

It is hoped that a student who has dropped out of the formal education system, may "drop in" in a non-formal setting. If an individual was forced out of school or college because of economic, social or political reasons, his re-entry into education through the non-formal approach would be most desirable in many ways. The dropout has not given up the urge to learn and to continue his education. One academic aim is, thus, to bring all dropouts into the non-formal stream of learning.

To raise the extent of functional literacy

The literacy programmes have not reached the many thousands of illiterates because they do not perceive its benefits. These illiterates are so miserably poor that they have no interest in learning to read and write. Functional literacy is dependent on the functions of recipients and, therefore, can be expected to be attainable. Functional literacy is the ability to put knowledge of reading and writing to better use. If a group of non-formal learners can become functionally literate, it would be a great step forward towards the objective of eradication of illiteracy. Because the non-formal learners wish to improve their ability to earn, they can perceive the need of functional literacy. It is also hoped that functional

literacy may trigger the interest of the non-formal learners to educate themselves further.

To prepare individual for self-employment

Those who could not avail of formal education, and yet are desirous of gainful employment, may benefit from NFE. The aim of formal education is predominantly, the preparation for jobs. The NFE tries to reach those who can be self-employed either in their own homes or in their own establishments. The practical aim of many non-formal programmes for education is that a learner create his own job and occupation. The programmes are practical from the point of view of the learners, but academic for the educationists because they will be interested in transforming the unproductive persons into gainfully employed workers.

To retrain adults for the changing requirements of jobs and family life

It is not only the dropouts from formal schooling and the illiterates who need NFE, but also the trained persons who find that their training has now become obsolete because of advances in science and technology. The teacher must now learn new ways of teaching through educational aids, the post office sorter must learn to use the pin-code for sorting letters and the doctor must know the properties of the new drugs before he can use them. Use of machines and computers in some jobs makes it necessary to retrain persons. Many 'refresher courses' have been initiated by employing agencies as a sort of non-formal in-service education. When adults realize the need to improve their skills and abilities of their own accord and take up NFE voluntarily for this purpose, it is the fulfilment of one of these objectives.

To complement formal education in a country of largely uneducated people

When formal education takes so many years of life and requires enormous resources to educate such a vast number of illiterates, the country cannot wait for so long for education all through formal education system. Ways and means

to speed up education through the non-formal approach, to complement formal education, as well as to retain persons who find their training has become obsolete, had to be devised. Formal education is bound to collapse if it is also burdened with the non-formal educational system. Although some traditional educational institutions have been offering NFE also, they have to divert some of their own resources for doing so. There is also the ever-present danger of non-formal education being turned into formal education, with all its inherent limitations and drawbacks.

To provide life-long education

Many formally educated persons, specially those who are interested in advancing their knowledge beyond the confines of the college curricula, keep on studying on their own, even after their formal requirements have been completed. They may not all be scholars or specialists, but are normal intelligent persons who wish to keep abreast of all the developments and discoveries in their sphere of interest. Education is a life-long process, which can only be met by NFE. When NFE is freely available, even vacillating individuals are drawn into the non-formal stream, their marginal interests are strengthened and their unfelt needs for continuing education become manifest.

Economic of Non-formal Education

Non-formal education also requires considerable financial outlay. The budget under the Seventh Five-Year-Plan set aside for education, has provided for substantial funds for adult and non-formal education. Expenditure on NFE is an investment, as it is meant for the formation of human capital at a given time, and positively influences future economic growth and human welfare. The benefits accrue not only to those for whom the money is currently spent but also to the next generation, for non-formal education can mobilise the next generation for formal education. In the USA, the formal education system has given rise to a large number of non-formal programmes. This has been a great incentive for universities, colleges, and even schools which have educated thousands of youths and adults in non-formal ways for better

affluent delinquents, the poverty-based crimes can surely be removed if the poor jobless can find jobs.

The disparities in income can be reduced, so also the anti-social economic activities, if NFE develops employability, and better civic sense and values among the people.

Child Labour

One of the greatest evils in India is child-labour. Children who should be at school, or at play, are forced to do hard manual work for long hours to supplement the family income. Child-labour is also associated with poverty and large families which parents find difficult to support. The increased employability and more income, and awareness of the need for small families by adults through NFE can result in decreased child-labour.

Not only will the enlightened and better employed parents disapprove of child-labour, they can also be expected to transfer the same values and attitude of abhorrence of child-labour to their own sons and daughters. The evils of child-labour and child-marriage can be controlled by improving the economic productivity of adults.

The effects of NFE may not be immediately apparent. We have not experienced so far the expected results because we have not been able to introduce NFE on a massive and pragmatic scale. There have also been inappropriate choices in the selection of instructors and in the implementation of the schemes. But with a continued effort at betterment through revised planning and implementation, education through the non-formal approach must surely lead to economic betterment and higher educational status of the people.

Summary

Non-formal education means learning to change one's behaviour to enhance the quality of life through work and values without formal schooling. The academic objectives of NFE are clustered around dropouts from formal education, functional illiterates, unemployed or under-employed youths and adults. NFE is not a counter activity in opposition to formal education, but is meant to complement the formal

stream of education. Those **who** could not be reached through education are to be reached through non-formal ways of education. Children are to be reached primarily for schooling in a non-formal setting without coercion. NFE has the potential of being a life-long education.

The economic implications of NFE are many, particularly for a country which has such a vast population of adult illiterates. More employment opportunities for youth and adults, increase in personal and family income, lowering of economic disparities, reduction in crimes associated with poverty and end to child-labour are some of the positive results which can be achieved through NFE.

NEED FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION IN INDIA

Poverty and Illiteracy

Poverty is probably the worst misfortune afflicting our country. In spite of our vast economic potentials, a very large percentage of our population remains miserably poor even today. A direct outcome of poverty, or quite likely, its cause, is illiteracy. Millions in India still do not know how to read and write. Steeped in ignorance, they are plagued by superstition, poor health and malnutrition, and live in sub-human conditions in dark and dingy hovels. All the efforts that have been made, and are being made, to lift them above the poverty-line have met with only limited success—the total eradication of poverty from India is yet a distant dream. Because of their ignorance, the poor have hardly any access to increased economic opportunities, and have apparently been by-passed by the technological and scientific advancements of modern times. They are being exploited, nevertheless, in every way, and have been compelled to eke out a subsistence living. They have even become apathetic to any positive change.

The Urban Poor

The process of urbanization has made the situation still worse for the urban poor. Urbanization is generally associated with an abnormal increase in population in cities and towns, which creates tremendous problems of housing, employment, schooling, social hygiene and other civic amenities needed for an ordered living in towns. Rapid industrialization, a characteristic feature of modern industrial development, has led to ugly social and environmental

conditions for most of the cities. Vast slums and dirty tenements have come up in many big cities where the poor have migrated from rural areas to seek better opportunities, and where they have to live in the most abominable conditions, which breed crimes and epidemics.

Ramachandra (1976, p. 359) in the course of his various urban surveys, found that 25 to 40 percent of the urban population in India lives in slums. Children under the age of 14 make up 40 per cent of the slum population. They have to live in dark and unventilated hutments which can only breed crimes, or despair.

This widespread poverty and ignorance must be removed not only because it is bad *per se* but also because its eradication is indispensable for the development and advancement of a country. No scheme for development and progress will now be supported by the people if the programme for action does not take into account the uplift of the down-trodden and the weaker sections of the society. That is why almost all political parties in our democratic society have schemes for the removal of poverty to gain the support of the poor. But the more important aspect is that these poor people constitute an untapped reservoir of potential for the development of the country if only their ignorance and poverty can be removed. Every society needs educated and enlightened people who should be directly involved in its democratic life.

The social, economic and cultural conditions of the weaker sections of the society make it imperative that they should be helped to acquire new knowledge, skills, values and attitudes not only for their own betterment but for the good of the country as a whole. This may involve re-learning, or even unlearning what has been learnt before, to adjust their present mode of life to better living. Our country, therefore, needs to encourage all efforts to educate the less-favoured sections of the population, specially when the poor and the illiterate form the majority.

Fighting Ignorance Through Education

Education is the most powerful weapon for fighting ignorance and illiteracy, and to bring about a lasting social change,

for a country's progress is measured by its level of education. Currently, educational opportunities in our country seem to be distributed unevenly depending upon the various income groups. The universal right to education, which is basic to the good quality of life is denied to these under-privileged classes. The children of the poor and the socially discriminated are less favoured, right from childhood. They are prematurely forced to do adult work for which they are ill-prepared due to the lack of pre-school education and absence of opportunities for physical and mental development. The degree of failures in the lower socio-economic classes in the primary and secondary schools is also reflected in higher education. The inadequacy of literary and out-of-school job training programmes strengthen the fact that those who did not receive education in their earlier years, will find it impossible to educate themselves as they grow older.

Formal Education and the Weaker Sections

Can the present formal education system help to break down privileges, eliminate exploitation and open opportunities for the advancement of the weaker sections of the society ?

Coomb (1976) believes that education includes informal, formal and non-formal methods of learning. Informal learning usually refers to a relatively unorganized and un-systematic learning. The way an individual acquires attitudes, skills, values and information from his day-to-day experiences without any conscious intent of learning on his part, is a good example of informal learning. Coomb defines the formal educational system (1970, p. 105) as the hierarchically structured, chronologically graded educational system running from primary school through university. This inflexible formal educational system is not meant to reach all the sections of a society and all the categories of men and women. Only the privileged groups, by and large, avail themselves of educational facilities through schools, colleges, universities and technological institutions.

Children of the poor either do not get to enter this system at all or drop out from it before they have gained anything beneficial by way of education and work-requirements. The

fixed point of entry and exit of formal education makes it even more difficult for persons from the weaker sections of the society to re-enter it.

From a quantitative point of view, formal education cannot satisfy general expectations. Till today, it has not been possible to meet a target date for free and compulsory education for all children in the age group of six to fourteen. From the contents point of view also, formal education is, to an extent unsatisfactory. For, very often, the jobs for which the students are prepared are the so-called white-collar jobs. The graduates, in many cases, neither find jobs suited to their qualifications, nor are they able to create employment for themselves. Many formal programmes fail to provide the type of education which could help the people to solve the problems of their daily life. Formal schooling continues to follow the wrong idea that all education can be provided during the first years of life, and that life is divided into parts, one of preparation and the other of action.

The formal education system seems more concerned with success in examinations in schools and colleges. Success is judged solely through the written reports and rigid examinations at fixed times and is marked by diplomas and degrees. The poor have fewer material resources to meet these conditions. The system, thus, becomes less suitable for the deprived sections of the society.

Viewing all this objectively, one may feel that the formal education system by itself, as it stands at present, cannot truly correct social disparities and inequalities nor can it provide equitable opportunities for all. In a large country such as ours, with its vast number of illiterates, semi-literates, the educated unemployed, the big rural population and the rapidly multiplying urban poor, it is obviously necessary to initiate an overall *open* educational system with a wider choice for the learners. Much more emphasis will have to be placed on the non-formal ways of education, particularly for those who are excluded from the benefits of formal schooling. The importance of non-formal education has also been recognized by the Government of India and it now forms an essential part of the revised educational planning.

Non-formal Education for the Formally Educated

Education is now recognized as a life-long process, and every person must be able to learn throughout his life. This is applicable not only for the weaker sections who can thus catch up at any stage with the literacy and education they had missed, it has equal validity for the formally educated also. The formally educated can continue more education and knowledge in the areas associated with their studies and work, or they can take up new subjects to study for their personal enlightenment. Those who have already benefited from formal education can also join the non-formal stream for further personal knowledge or professional expertise. As non-formal education emphasizes increased self-learning as a continuing process, it can be very effective not only for on-the-job performance, but also in activities other than the job.

The formally educated can conveniently adopt non-formal ways for studying new areas of knowledge, or learning new skills and values. A few such examples of what non-formal education can do for the formally educated are given below.

Examples

A university professor, with a post-graduate degree in history can take up the study of tribal customs, or foreign languages.

A college teacher could also take up computer programming or electronic media methods.

A housewife, with ample leisure time, could learn secretarial work or music.

A school teacher could take up model-making and craft work.

A tailor could join a course in dress-designing.

A hotel clerk may join a short course in Chinese cookery.

A businessman may take a course in public relations.

Summary

The large proportion of India's population is poor, living in both rural as well as urban areas. They live in pathetic conditions. Education in any form needs to be provided to them to improve their quality of life and to help them to

participate productively in the national development. The formal education system, because of its rigid chronologically graded structure, excludes the poor from its advantages. The non-formal education, which is flexible and relevant to the lives of illiterates and the poor, needs to be encouraged. Formally educated persons can also continue their education for either self-development or higher professional advancement in a non-formal way.

3

CONTENTS AND STATUS OF NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

The contents and the status of non-formal education (NFE) have been treated here as a single chapter because both of them have a close relationship. The nature of the contents reflects their status.

For studying the nature of the contents in NFE, some criteria are suggested. The nature of the contents can be understood by describing all, or the most used contents, and on their basis, the status of NFE can be determined.

Criteria

Criteria for studying the nature of the contents can be enumerated as follows :

1. Contents are learnable by participation in learning experience.
2. Contents are demonstrable to the learners.
3. Contents must be graded according to the levels of the learners' abilities.
4. Contents must be practicable.
5. Contents must be current.

Each one of these will now be described separately and in some details.

Contents are learnable by participation in learning experience

The contents of NFE represent the information, skills and habits which the non-formal learners must develop. The learner must use the contents while they are learning, or immediately

after learning. Therefore, the contents must be learnt speedily and in a short time. This can be done easily if the non formal learners can be involved in the learning process. The contents must be learnable either in the classroom, the laboratory, or in one's own house. In fact it can be done anywhere if the learners have the time to learn; this way learning becomes a part of the learner. One learner may take longer participation, while another learner may take much less. But the opportunity and encouragement to participate must be there. The contents need be used so that they can be practised repeatedly.

The ideas, skills and habits must be learnable by practice, drill, rehearsal and repetition. The learners can use these contents again and again to learn them thoroughly.

If involvement or participation of the learners is possible, a place for this has to be provided. Materials, equipment and furniture would also be needed. A guide, or a supervisor, or a demonstrator too will be needed when the non-formal learners drill, practise or participate in learning. We are concerned here mainly with practical learning, like tailoring, using tools and implements, or following any process of agriculture. Reading instructions are the first or one part of learning, but participation is another and more significant part.

Contents are demonstrable to the learners

If physical skills can be demonstrated to the learners, they can be easily and conveniently learnt. It is the demonstration which clearly explains the processes to the learners for it makes the non-formal learners observe and repeat the performances. A new dish can be prepared, a kitchen mixer can be used to grind soaked legumes, a piece of embroidery can be done on a sewing machine: these are demonstrations which can be observed and the process learnt easily. Demonstrable contents can also be learnt through visual aids and can be evaluated through the performance of the learners

Contents must be graded according to the levels of the learners' abilities

The contents must be arranged in a sequence of simple to

complex. Simple lessons should become the basis for more advanced or difficult lessons. Simple contents must be used before the complex ones. This order, of simple to complex, is inherent in knowledge and in various branches of learning. It is also reflected in the textbooks compiled for various 'standards'. For example, in arithmetic, addition and subtraction are taught before multiplication, division, and words before sentences.

However, the contents of NFE are compressed and can be learnt in a relatively shorter time. One reason for compressing the contents is that the learners may be adults who have attained mental and physical maturity already. They also have the capacity to learn much outside the non-formal stream by their personal efforts, after the teacher-guided experience. Therefore, much of the indirect contents and the 'frills' can be avoided in non-formal teaching. The levels of difficulties may be more, but they can be tackled quicker.

The levels of the learners in non-formal classes can be both many and mixed. The task of maintaining a fixed standard may be difficult or even impossible. The learners can be grouped according to their levels of knowledge and skill.

Contents must be practicable

The contents of non-formal education can be important for the learners only if they have some practical utility for the learners. The contents which train the learners for jobs, which make them literate, which teach them upkeep of a house to care for the environment, or to plant a garden, have practical purpose. These contents will either improve personal or family life, or could secure employment on the basis of practical usefulness. The more the practicality of the contents, the more the usefulness of contents would be. The criteria that the contents should be learnable and demonstrable are correlated with the practicality criterion. Because if the contents have genuine utility and can solve the problems of the learners, those contents must be practicable, learnable, and demonstrable.

Many boys and grown-ups find that literacy training does not have any practical utility for them. The reason being the

utterly degraded life of the unprivileged, in which even simple reading, writing and counting is not of any use. They are so impoverished and downtrodden that even the simplest skills have no purpose for them. The practicality of non-formal contents is a vast continuum extending from 'three R's' at one end to the operation of electronic computer at the other. And this vast range can be compressed by non-formal education.

Contents must be current

One criticism of formal education in India is that it is antiquated, purely academic and has no relevance to contemporary requirements. This cannot be said for non-formal education. In fact, the absence of these factors makes the non-formal education so purposeful. Because non-formal education has a practical purpose, it can exist only to impart contemporary, or topical knowledge. Of course, there are some contents in knowledge which have not become obsolete, or out-dated, for instance, addition, subtraction, division and multiplication. But this age-old knowledge can be learnt in a new way and with less effort through newer aids. Even complex calculations can be done easily through pocket calculators whose operation is so simple.

It is, thus, possible that old knowledge, which is useful in the present times, can be acquired through new ways, without the drudgery associated with the old. New knowledge and new methods can make learning much easier and make it possible for the masses to acquire 'advanced' knowledge which was once possible only through universities and colleges. NFE must use contemporary and topical contents, and in a contemporary way. Any information, knowledge, or skill that is still useful today, is contemporary. Nevertheless, some persons engage in non-formal study of ancient civilizations, old coins, extinct animals, and the like which to many appear quite irrelevant to contemporary life, though they themselves do not think so. Since these learners need it, and if the information can be provided to them, these contents also become contemporary and relevant to our times. Still, they are contemporary in a restricted sense which is not applicable to most other learners.

Contents of Non-Formal Education

The contents of NFE are so varied that any attempt to enumerate them would not be possible. These contents have emerged out of the people's needs, which are so different from the points of view of age, sex, levels of education, place of residence (urban or rural) and sometimes religion also. The levels of development in science and technology also determine the needs of people and, therefore, the contents of NFE also.

Very broadly, the non-formal contents can be of two types ; (1) contents for self-development, personal enjoyment and enlightenment, (2) contents for vocation, job, self-employment or business. Both types of contents can be useful for non-formal learners. The demand and the popularity will depend on their usefulness and the methods and means followed in imparting the knowledge of both types of contents.

Contents for self-development and enlightenment

A qualified engineer who wishes to learn music in a non-formal way, is an example of using contents for self-development and personal enjoyment. The person has no wish to earn money by exploiting the contents of music. The person has learnt the contents just for the sake of learning and to enjoy music. Only those people who are well-off or have ample spare time for it can indulge in this type of non-formal education. Much of this NFE is obtained by self-help and by self-effort, but it is not directed towards generating income. There are some philanthropists and social workers who wish to keep on learning to be able to serve others in a better way. NFE can be given through social work, preaching religion and morals, rehabilitation of fallen women and juvenile criminals, uplift of the poor, and helping the handicapped and the destitute, but such contents would be required by only a few, whose aim is not personal enrichment, but to use the contents for service to others.

Some fortunate people in cities who have some land around their houses may develop an interest in kitchen-gardening, or in growing fruit trees like guava, citrus, or mango; they may

also cultivate vegetables and flowers for pleasure or personal consumption. They too, may take up NFE to enrich their knowledge about their hobbies.

There are also some public-spirited persons who are keen to do religious, political or social work, not for material gains, but to serve others. They can also take up NFE in social welfare, nursing, care of the old and infirm, moral and religious work and other related subjects which they can keep on studying and learning, to be better able to serve others, though such persons would be few in number as selfless persons are likely to be very limited.

All the criteria of the nature of non-formal contents will be applicable in their case also. The learners would be their own judge to determine the fulfilment of the criteria stated here.

Contents for Vocation, Employment, Business, or Self-employment

The contents of NFE are needed, at present, to make the learners employable. There are thousands of unemployed, or under-employed people, who either lack the required skills, or there is no demand for the skills they have. As economy changes, the demand and supply structures also change. A region where agriculture and farming once flourished, may now be an industrial site where there is no demand for the tier skills. People will either have to learn new competency for the job or migrate to other places where the old skills are still usable.

The contents which make people employable or economically productive are extensive. Some youths and adults from towns may wish to improve their skills in written and spoken English. Some may wish to learn French or Russian. This can be easily done through NFE. In the 1970s, public lectures became very popular and remunerative in the USA. People flocked to hear lectures and discourses on different subjects for which tickets had to be bought. Such public discourses can be another mode of NFE for self-enlightenment.

Some art lovers join non-formal classes in painting, ceramics, dance and other creative crafts. The contents are

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used not for their employment value, but for recreation, personal enjoyment, and for self-expression.

Christian churches, and now other religious institutions as well, hold religious congregations where theological lectures and discussions also take place. These discourses are commonly meant for spiritual purposes though they provide some incentive in leadership and social work. In times of calamity, or disasters like floods, famines, riots, epidemics, or a war, an urgent need for non-formal training to give succour emerges, though it is likely to be a temporary phase only. To meet the immediate needs for volunteer workers, nurses and other para-medical staff, even for cooks to prepare meals for such a large number of people, NFE becomes not only a necessity but also an urgency. Though, the demands would hopefully, be of a temporary nature, the need for non-formally trained personnel is very great because many people are to be reached through those who are trained non-formally. Such are the examples of non-formal contents to be used in a selfless way for the service of the needy and the suffering.

Another, growing demand is for fancy and exotic food preparations in cities. This is already being met by non-formal training. The agencies offering NFE in food preparation, quantity cookery and preservation techniques are many and varied. Home science colleges and catering institutes are doing a big job in this respect. The experience of PRAGATI, the NFE centre of the Education and Extension Department of Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University, Baroda, is that food preparation demonstrations have been at the top of priority and popularity. Urban women increasingly wish to learn fancy cookery. Baking, Chinese dishes, party snacks, and fast-foods have been the contents of non-formal classes, most in demand.

Besides the home science colleges, the centres of adult and continuing education of universities have also offered non-formal instructions in food preparation. Another agency is the *Mahila Mandal*—the urban women's organization in some cities which runs classes for all kinds of cooking and food preparations. Some extension agencies of the government and

agricultural universities also conduct non-formal classes at some places during a certain period of the year, for preservation of fruit, and making syrups, jams and jellies. Many popular magazines, especially women's magazines, publish cookery recipes, which is also a form of non-formal education in food preparation.

The contents in areas of science and technology are many and are still increasing. Some examples of contents in science and technology are computer operation courses, servicing of electronic equipment, repairs of electrical home appliances, and the like. Courses in weaving, dairying, bee-keeping and related subjects are also offered in a non-formal way. The non-formal education of farmers is carried on through *kisan melas* (fairs for farmers) organized by agricultural universities in a big way. Some large dairies and dairy institutes, also have extension units which offer non-formal courses in milk related techniques, including care of the milch cattle for farmers and cattle owners. Farming and allied activities have the greatest need for non-formal education and training as agriculture provides employment to the largest number of people in the rural areas. NFE can teach them to do their jobs in a better and more profitable way.

In cities and towns, one single occupational need covered by a large number of non-formal training agencies is sewing, or tailoring. Not only women in cities, but men also, learn sewing, dress-making, embroidery work, not only to save money, but also to earn a regular income. Tailoring has become a growing commercial venture and women need to enter it in a professional way. A related self-employment venture for women would be opening a boutique of fancy and modern dresses for women and children, designed and made at home. Non-formal education for running such small establishments for marketing saris, *kurta-kameez* outfits and other fancy and presentation articles is a current urban need which can be exploited by those who have learnt the craft through non-formal training. A simple way to earn is to compile recipe-books for tasty meals and party dishes, which are much in demand by housewives all over India. Another way could be to hold cookery competitions to which

house-wives could be invited to participate. Part of the entry fee could go for the award of kitchenware to the winners.

Not all women who join NFE in cookery always use their knowledge for making money, but some do. Those who have learnt cookery for earning, start their own training classes in cookery and preparation, after having learnt it at no cost at a university or college. The stream of non-formal education, thus, flows on.

The contents of job-oriented NFE are as varied as the jobs, and yet education is not provided for all the emerging jobs. The universities and the technological institutes have the potential for imparting non-formal training in certain significant sectors which could benefit many. The current trend is to offer NFE through university centres of adult and continuing education. These centres operate in a non-formal way, and use the expertise and material resources of the associated colleges or departments.

Non-Formal Content and Research Studies

As is obvious, the contents of NFE for self-development as well as for vocational preparation are too numerous to be listed. Some of the contents cannot even be properly classified for they can belong to both the categories discussed here. Shah (1978) compiled a list of content areas of NFE, by identifying research conducted on or about them. Her list covers many areas in which research studies have been conducted.

Some of them are given here :

- Agricultural Science
- Arts and Crafts
- Business Arithmetic
- Civics
- Cooperative Development Activities
- Cultural Education
- Family-Welfare
- Folk Arts
- General Reading
- Health, Hygiene and Nutrition

Knowledge of the Country
Parental Education
Village Administration
Vocational Education
Women's Activities
Youth Activities
Cultural, Social and Religious Activities
Income-generating Activities (book-binding, typing,
sewing, etc.).

Status of Non-Formal Education

'Status' is defined by sociologists as a position in social order, or milieu. The status of a programme is a relative description because it is described in comparison with other statuses, or positions. The status of non-formal education (NFE) can be described by comparing non-formal education with other branches or areas of education. This comparison of the new area, or stream of non-formal education, with age-old traditional and established areas of education is inevitable as no other criteria or comparisons are available. A new variety of cloth can be compared to an old variety and its advantages and disadvantages weighed against each other. But when it is found that the new variety of cloth is not meant for the same purpose as the old one, a different criterion is to be sought. A primary method of defining status is necessary.

In the case of non-formal education, we have observed that it serves different groups and classes of people as compared to formal education. The two streams of education—the formal and the non formal—run parallel and both need different criteria to determine their status. The status of NFE is, in a way, related and somewhat dependent on the status of formal education. And yet, because the non-formal stream reaches different types or classes, of learners, it has a status of its own. The status of NFE can be described by its social significance, variety of contents and economic implications. The greater and wider social significance and economic implications of the contents, mean higher status.

Variety of Contents

The contents of the non-formal stream have an immense

diversity. The contents for self-development, enjoyment, personal improvement and enlightenment, represent the most imaginative variety. A person can develop in various ways, therefore, the non-formal contents for self development are also of many kinds. There can be artistic development of a person, as also religious, or moral. The contents listed under self-development represent development of interests, hobbies, talents through creative arts and crafts, literature and learning and now, also technology. The science clubs for students, drama and dance societies, writers' and journalists' guilds, gymnasiums and sports clubs are examples of non-formal contents for self development.

Non-formal contents related to, or resulting in, job preparation are also numerous. Some contents serve as in-service, and as pre-service requirements. The emphasis on such contents for employment is increasing with growing demands for jobs. Unemployment is a nation-wide problem. The non-formal education can prepare individuals for employment. Some have already found satisfying jobs as a result of their non-formal training. So, the increase in the variety of non-formal contents, oriented to employment, is associated with absorption of trained persons in gainful employments.

Since more people are buying television sets and radio receivers, more TV, and radio mechanics are needed. Classes for TV and radio servicing and repairs are springing up in many cities. In fast-progressing countries, non-formal contents of science and technology education will also change and increase. But such developed countries also have a fast changing formal education stream which can take care of all those to be educated if the population remains under control. The rich variety of the non-formal contents reflects the desirable status of NFE. The wider the variety, the higher the status.

Centres for non-formal education

In several Indian universities, centres of adults and continuing education have been established. These centres provide many forms of non-formal education, with varied contents. Besides the university centres of non-formal education, the

industries, voluntary organizations, state governments, religious bodies, families and individuals also carry on a variety of NFE. Considering the extent of demands in the non-formal contents, the status of NFE is valid, desirable and is improving.

Social Significance

The non-formal contents also contribute to social life. The social needs of the people are their desirability in society, compatibility with other people and usefulness. People can become socially desirable by their neighbours, friends and relatives and colleagues, by improving their educational status. Even a primary level of education improves a person socially and makes his status higher than an illiterate. The NFE imparts a change in behaviour and mental attitude, which raises the social significance of the person. The contents which are for the development of the person, or for enjoyment and enlightenment, teach the person to use his or her time in a personally profitable way. The contents for employment can make a person gainfully employed.

Even where a person is without a job and is absolutely illiterate, the NFE still provides social uplift. Such persons can learn a skill or a hobby, or more so, when they find a job and can completely transform themselves. Because they had no skill, and were unproductive and unemployed, they considered themselves, and were considered by others as well, as unwanted and a burden to the society. The NFE revives their hopes of becoming socially useful and desired. They also become socially conscious, and at least, aware of the benefits of planned parenthood, clean homes and surroundings, as also about the use of mass media.

The social significance of NFE increases if it makes the people socially conscious, socially desirable, and socially useful. Can non-formal education develop social consciousness of the people towards social evils, like dowry, alcoholism, drug-abuse and corruption? We need to develop social sensitivity to such national problems affecting both youths and adults. Social sensitivity is increased by social desirability which again is increased by achieving social importance.

Social desirability is seen in developing correct social values, attitudes and habits. A person who condemns dowry and also supports education of women, has socially desirable values. Condemning exploitation of children and promoting literacy are also socially desirable virtues. Belief and practice of the small family norm, equality of men and women in education and employment are equally desirable. Non-formal education contents for self-development do promote socially desirable values, attitudes and practices. And, therefore, deserve to be commended.

There is social usefulness in all voluntary services for the improvement of the communities. Persons who are educated can become more useful to their community. The literacy drives, family-welfare campaigns and other community services of the non-formal stream, make persons socially productive. The voluntary services at the time of floods, epidemics, fires, accidents and other disasters, are mostly the results of non-formal training. People can be made socially aware by instructing them to use their capabilities and resources, through NFE. The social significance of NFE, thus, is a yardstick to measure its status. In India, widespread poverty and illiteracy have blunted the social consciousness, desirability and usefulness of a large number of people. These have led to emphasis on job-oriented and literacy programmes in our non-formal stream. When we reach the stage of less predominance of vocational and literacy programmes, we can use our non-formal stream to develop the social awareness, desirability, and usefulness of the people in an increasing measure. Nevertheless, vocational training and literacy work must continue to develop as a secondary endeavour, as the literate and employed can be better expected to develop social awareness, desirability and usefulness. The non-formal programmes aiming at them have a good status.

Economic Implications

An educational programme that directs itself to improving the economic conditions of the recipients is bound to have a high status. The NFE, in the light of the extent of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, cannot but concern itself with

economic uplift. Because of the gravity of these problems, those non-formal programmes which work for the removal of poverty, have the surest possibilities of survival and continuance.

For young people who are entering the job-market, the non-formal programmes have a status only if the programmes give them skills and opportunities for employment. The prospect of economic betterment through NFE is the strongest component of its status. The economic value simultaneously increases the content value and the social significance of the non-formal stream. The non-formal programmes for TV and radio servicing, secretarial work, tailoring and dress-making, and computer programming, have instant economic value. For the young non-formal learners, these courses have great job-potential. So, if non-formal programmes make people employable, or increases their economic assets, they have a high status.

The marketability of skills and knowledge does not remain static. In developing countries, the traditional skills and knowledge are becoming obsolete as new skills and knowledge become more profitable. In developed countries, where resources are abundant, highly qualified scientists' pools have been established, and new technologies which can be commercially exploited, also come up fast. In both types of countries some skills and knowledge keep on becoming obsolete. The non-formal stream, then, has a good justification as the economic values can be enhanced by non-formal programmes.

People become more materialistic, money-minded and luxury prone when education which makes these values possible, is available. Better opportunities to learn ways of earning more, will make people more materialistic. Such a vicious circle, promoting NFE, may continue for a long time, because it helps to increase income. The economic values of NFE can be found in monetary terms, such as income, supplementary earnings, or the savings of non-formal learners.

The three components—self-development, social significance and economic implications—of various contents can be used to understand the status of NFE. An increasing diversity of contents, an improving social position of the learners, and their

rising economic prospects, all reflect the high status of NFE. Because India is still a poor and developing country in economic terms, the vocational NFE has a higher status than a merely literary, or cultural non-formal programme for education. Vocational programmes must be offered in rural areas for the large number of unemployed and under-employed, whereas in urban areas where employment may not be a problem, other components of NFE can be offered.

Impact on People

A direct and visible factor which determines the status of NFE is its impact on people. The impact is the effect of the behaviour of the people brought about, in this case, through NFE. Observation of a wide segment of people would show if the life of the people has improved as a result of NFE, i.e., if the NFE has had any impact upon the people. The improvement can be moral, social, aesthetic, and economic.

The social scientists have studied the impact of various NFE programmes by using research methods. The beneficiaries of NFE are observed, interviewed and asked about the benefits. The observations, interviews, and questionnaires provide information about the improvements among the people. The survey can be conducted by using any, or all of the various methods of information collection.

There have been surveys on the impact on social and economic development of the people, though not much attention has been paid to their moral and aesthetic status. Shah (1978) conducted some studies on change in values, attitudes and motivation regarding literacy, family-planning, health and nutrition. She noted that people have benefited by adopting more desirable attitudes and practices in these areas as a result of NFE. People were also observed to retain their knowledge because of continuing their education in a non-formal way.

Impact of Literacy Programmes

The impact of literacy programmes had been quite varied. People have acquired literacy and yet have lapsed into illiteracy after a period of inactive literate life, because of lack

of continued encouragement and lack of reading materials. Literacy programmes have not shown a quick impact because people do not associate literacy with economic gains.

The extent of the awareness of people in areas of nutrition, family-planning, health, business, arts and handicrafts, and in many other areas can be studied. If the impact is in terms of better or higher knowledge, a higher status of NFE can be taken for granted. A positive impact on the knowledge, value and competencies of people indicates a good and rising status of NFE. People progress socially, morally and aesthetically when they acquire correct knowledge, correct ways of using it and desirable values and attitudes. The economic impact of NFE is possible only through correct and relevant knowledge and opportunities to use it for employment, professions, business and industries. All NFE programmes must have some components of impact to have status. The economic and social impacts are stressed by many, but the moral and the aesthetic components are also important, and cannot be ignored.

4

PEOPLE WHO NEED NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Non-formal education has been referred to by some cities as a cheap and watered-down version of formal education, meant only for the lowly and the deprived. But in a country where 64 per cent of the people are absolutely illiterate, and a large per cent of the so-called literates have not even been able to complete their school education, non-formal education is the only way for the removal of illiteracy and for fostering an interest in education among the masses.

A large number of educated unemployed, or under-employed, also need some further training or education for a more gainful employment, or to make them better workers at their present jobs. In spite of increasing urbanization, a vast majority of those migrating from villages to the cities still retain their rural attitudes which creates problems of adjustment for them, as also for the civic authorities. There is a consensus that the people who come from rural areas to settle in towns need further instruction or education, to develop a positive attitude to the complexity of urban life.

There is also a growing realization that an alternative form of education, at least to supplement if not to supplant the 'white-collar' clerk producing formal education system, is needed. There are more people *outside* the formal school system in need of education than those inside it. Programmes for adult education are, therefore, needed as a remedial measure for them.

The school dropouts, the children, the youths and the adults, who could not continue their school education even up to the eighth standard can be helped, and must be helped,

to overcome this handicap, and this is possible through non-formal education alone. Non-formal education, therefore, cannot be dismissed as a second-rate system of education.

Contents of Non-Formal Education

For both the literates and illiterates, non-formal education can have the contents for self-fulfilment and for dealing with the problems of health, nutrition, family life, environment, and social evils. Since the world of experience of the deprived is very limited, non-formal education has the obligation of expanding their horizons for enrichment of life, and opening their vision to better opportunities.

The main emphasis in non-formal education should be on programmes based on contents which are directly relevant to the struggle against poverty, and which activate the people to solve the various problems they face in their day-to-day life. The contents of these programmes according to the Directorate of Non-Formal Education are :

1. Information and knowledge about environment.
2. Knowledge about social, economic, scientific and technological changes in the midst of which young people live and work.
3. Elementary principles of health, hygiene, child-care, and nutrition.
4. Basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic.
5. Introductory occupational and vocational skill programmes to prepare the learners for a job, or for self-employment.

Functional components of the non-formal education must be the key principles in deciding the priorities. Various Unesco reports on surveys of non-formal education in Asia urge functionality in contents and down-to-earth problem-centered practicality.

In the case of a developing country like ours, it has to be primarily directed for the economic uplift and the eradication of poverty. It needs to include both knowledge and training: the former for removing ignorance, lack of thinking and for

self direction, the latter for increased production and efficiency.

Literacy

The problem of illiteracy in India is a problem of quantity which is responsible for the slow rate of literacy-growth. India cannot remain indifferent to this situation nor can it afford to let such a number of people keep away from the benefits of national development.

Five categories of people remain the chief victims of the evil of illiteracy. They are : (1) women, (2) industrial workers, (3) rural labourers, (4) slum dwellers in towns and (5) the tribals and *adivasis*. It is not incidental that the percentage of the poor and the illiterates overlap. Illiteracy has a close co-relation with poverty, and appears to be directly contributing to its growth.

Productive Skills

Unless the programmes for literacy, specially for the adults, are effectively integrated with the plans for economic development, the target for the removal of poverty is not likely to be achieved. Many adults perceive their educational needs to be secondary to their economic needs. Non-formal education, therefore, needs to be linked with economic programmes, specially for the weaker sections. Unless the poor perceive the prospects of economic uplift through literacy, they will not feel motivated towards education. Development of new skills, both in agriculture and industry, and participation in various crafts can help to achieve this purpose. Rudimentary literacy, or skills, do not go far towards economic improvement. The vocation-oriented non-formal education can be a tool for both educational improvement and the much desired social change. However, the removal of poverty cannot be an automatic result of economic growth and production. Development limited to economic growth, even when its rate is high, may not bring a real change in the living conditions of the majority of the people. Many people of some States with high concentration of industries are still miserably poor.

Nutrition, Health and Sanitation

The contents of education should relate to the community needs for better nutrition, hygiene and sanitation through breaking down negative attitudes and wrong traditions, and thus raising the economic level of the people.

Malnutrition is regarded as one of the main problems of our country. FAO's third world-wide survey on nutrition reported that at least 20 per cent of the population of the Third World was underfed, while the diet of 60 per cent was nutritiously deficient. Although all age-groups of the weaker sections of the world's population are affected by malnutrition to a degree, the groups most affected are children, adolescents, pregnant women and nursing mothers. All schemes for development are bound to fail unless the population builds up the strength and stamina to face these challenges. Mental and moral progress depends upon physical fitness. That is why nutrition is now a subject of national importance.

In our country, where despite increase in food production, poverty and malnutrition continue to exist, it is all the more essential to create awareness about nutrition and a wholesome diet. Besides poverty, religious and social taboos also work against health-giving and nutrition foods though they are easily available at a lower cost. The ways and means of reaching these ignorant people through non-formal education must be explored, for it appears to be the only form of education to which they can respond.

Inter-related Problems of Malnutrition

Any national level programme of nutrition will have a slim chance of success, or of achieving a lasting result unless other problems associated with malnutrition, like deficiency diseases, unhygienic living conditions and environmental sanitation, and what is most important, rapid growth of population, are also simultaneously tackled. Poor sanitation, unsafe drinking water and ignorance of even elementary hygiene are the common causes of infectious diseases from which children of weaker sections who live in slum, mostly suffer. Though these diseases have their origin in poverty, lack of health education and absence of civic awareness are also contributing factors.

A dynamic nutrition *cum* health education programme is required to reach the out-of-school population, specially the girls and the young mothers.

Family Planning and Population Education

The impact of health and nutrition education will hardly be seen in practice if the population continues to grow rapidly. The most unfortunate aspect of this galloping increase in population is that all our economic and social developments achieved in the face of so many odds are either submerged or have to spread out very thin, unable to keep pace with the fast growing population which means more persons every year to care for and to feed. Top priority has to be accorded to population education programmes in view of the magnitude of the problem of population explosion in India.

The surveys show that though family-planning for controlling the growth of population has now been largely accepted, there is still a very wide gap between its acceptance and practice. The weaker sections who contribute the most to the population explosion, have less information and so, have less motivation to adopt family planning measures. All sections of the society, therefore, need to be educated about the benefits of family planning and how it can be practised.

Activities for Personal Development

A fruitful and purposeful utilization of leisure is necessary for making life happier and fuller. There is the need to initiate the work of organizing people for self-development through better utilization of their time. Women in our country form a special group who need personal development most. Their activities are largely limited to lower-grade tasks, or to some social activities, if they belong to a higher stratum. The society and the family still do not expect women to be socially active in community affairs or civic problems, and prefer that women should remain confined to their homes. Non-formal education is important for women also to make them aware of their wider responsibilities and to prepare them for their civic participation and diversification of their interest for personal or social betterment.

There is a progressive understanding and realization of the fact that people from weaker sections, which incidently form the majority, are persons with strong work experience, with individual and group responsibilities, and considerable proficiency in folk music and arts. Considering all these, it will be desirable, and quite feasible, to have an organization of young men and women started where they live, based primarily on their interests. The participants in these programmes can be helped to find practical solutions to their genuine problems and to have opportunities for self development through organized activities. One significant benefit for the youths can be the diversion of their attention from undesirable activities to socially useful work. The emphasis on cultural and recreational activities mostly found in such types of organizations can be transformed into overall personality development and a positive attitude towards fellow participants, the community and society.

Non-formal education is not confined to any specific category or group, but limitations of expertise and resources would compel the adoption of priorities. The target groups will be :

1. Those who never went to a school.
2. Those who dropped out of schools.
3. Unemployed youths in search of jobs.
4. Young men and women in rural areas.
5. Youths in tribal areas.

Deprived Groups and Non-Formal Education

The beneficiaries of non-formal education described so far are those who have been unable to achieve socio-economic advancement or have been denied a place in society because of economic constraints. But the well-to-do and the affluent can also join non-formal education programmes for further self-development or for cultivating their interests according to their individual interests and personal status.

Age-wise, the non-formal education groups can be: children, youth and adults; sex-wise they can be male and female. They can be further classified socially as homemakers, members

of societies and organizations, slum dwellers and residents of quarters based upon economic status or caste. They can be grouped occupationally as domestic servants, petty traders, industrial workers and the like. The non-formal education classes can be on the basis of the degree of literacy : illiterates, semi-literates and literates.

Contents for various groups

Contents of non-formal education for the various groups can be :

1. Young persons :

Children of 6 to 12 years : literacy skills, habit formation, health education, useful leisure-time activities.

Youths of 13 to 19 years : literacy skills, creative and productive leisure-time activities, vocational training for future, health and nutrition education, population education, home improvement, marriage and family life, citizenship and leadership education.

2. Adults : both males and females :

literacy skills, population education, child-care, family welfare, environmental education, vocational skills, leadership education, management of dual responsibilities of home and job.

If the youths belong to any occupational groups, as previously discussed, non-formal education contents can be planned to : (1) increase the present occupational efficiency. For example, a domestic servant can be taught to use electrical and electronic home appliance, (2) develop new occupational skills like book-binding, tailoring, etc.

For women home-makers only

Most of the persons for non-formal education would be women, specially of the weaker sections, since they may not be gainfully employed outside the house. A woman has to play different roles at different stages of life : as a young girl, working as domestic help to mother; as a young wife and

mother, doing household duties and child-rearing; and as a mother-in-law—an elderly person who has to win respect and affection from both the family and society.

Women in the first two stages are likely to attend non-formal education classes. However, they may be very tired after attending to their diverse roles and their attendance in the classes and their responses may be slow.

Illiteracy, ignorance and superstition are very high among women. Non-formal education, besides removing these, has to work to widen their mental horizon and to develop social and productive skills, through better use of their leisure leading to self-employment or to some gainful employment outside the home.

Summary

The contents of non-formal education will have to be relevant to the clientele for this system. The non-formal education, by and large, at present, is meant for those who are illiterate and have missed the opportunity to learn in their earlier years. So, the areas of non-formal learning can be literacy, self-development, health, nutrition, sanitation, population, self-employment and other vocational skills. A wide variety of topics will help the non-formal learners to select the content most relevant to their developmental tasks. The women who are home-makers have the greatest need of non-formal education.

5

COMMUNITY STUDY IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Non-formal education (NFE) programmes, to be relevant to the needs and the interests of the community, must focus on their actual requirements and the good they can do for the community as a whole. The community, and the community needs have, therefore, to be properly studied. This applies to all the constituents of the community—the privileged and the disadvantaged, the young and the old, the literate and the illiterate, man and woman, the employed and the unemployed, and the persons pursuing a hobby or preparing for a profession. NFE classes will be attended by these persons only if the classes can offer them what they actually need. These can be :

A basic preparation for a new job or new information, ability, or skill leading to advancement in the present job.

New hobby or development of an existing talent.

Chance to utilize some new knowledge.

Opportunity to meet, talk, listen to and exchange ideas with persons of equal status, or persons of remarkable abilities.

Privilege of enjoying a demonstration, performance or a special programme.

The study of the needs of persons who are already educated and aware of the concept of life-long education and can articulate their needs and interests, will not pose much problem. However, persons belonging to the deprived sections of the

community more than the privileged, the rural more than the urban, the women more than the men, and the girls, more than the boys, are mostly not aware of their educational needs. Education is the last priority for them, mostly determined by their guardians. They are kept away from the environment which can give them knowledge about what they lack for a better quality of life. While well-to-do members of the community know, precisely what type of education will help them to use their talents and energies profitably, the deprived sections, at times, are so dazzled by the glamour of the items though they often prove totally unsuited for their personal and professional life. They may consider fancy embroidery and making party dishes more important than literacy, nutrition education or child-care, which may be the very things they are lacking but have failed to recognize. A poor learner may even be fatalistic and totally unaware of the actual problems arising out of lack of education. He or she may blame sickness, poverty or a large family to god's will, or to the evil-eye, rather than to personal ignorance and lack of education.

An NFE programme organizer needs to find out these negative qualities before the class. The instructor could begin the classes with something the poor learners enjoy the most—a film or a puppet show, for example. During community study, the learners belonging to the weaker sections should be helped to develop awareness about the very many topics they need to know about. This can be done through exhibitions and displays right in their own surroundings, demonstrations, visits to various places, discussions and talks, supplemented by pictorial and other visual aids.

Community resources

Besides studying the needs and interests of the learners, their personal and community resources—both human and material—have to be taken into account. The learning experiences will be appropriate only if NFE makes judicious use of these resources. The learning experience must suit the learner's pocket and must match his or her abilities. It must also leave time and energy for the person to attend to family and job responsibilities. Disregard of any of the above will

create lack of confidence in the learners, and fear and anxiety and may prompt the learners to give up this education. The community resources help to enrich and enliven the non-formal classes.

Stretching the Resources

The funds available for NFE are not always adequate. Still, they can be stretched by judicious planning so that the quality of the non-formal programme is adversely affected. Services of experts—doctors, educationists, environmentalists, child-specialists, and others—can be procured for special talks and demonstrations without any charge or at a much reduced fee. Premises for holding non-formal classes too, could be rented at a nominal rent or even, at no cost. Free materials, like cloth, tools, stationery, etc., may be donated by some public-spirited manufacturer or dealer, for a laudable cause. All these contribute both to the saving of the cost and the success of the non-formal programmes.

Some influential local leader may also help in securing additional funds from other sources. An NFE instructor must be in the know of local leaders of the deprived communities and must cultivate a rapport with them to seek their support and assistance for the success of the non-formal training programmes. Such persons, because of their contacts, knowledge, position and authority, can be a source of strength for NFE and may earn for the programme, the much needed support from the community. Their role in motivating the learners cannot be ignored. On the other hand, if they are ignored or disregarded, they may even work negatively for the NFE programmes, and can cause substantial damage through opposition or denial of support. Before the detailed planning of these non-formal programmes, one must fully explore all the community resources, including local patronage.

Allied Agencies

Community study also helps to identify other agencies engaged in imparting NFE in the same community. This will avoid overlapping of activities which could only mean wastage of resources, and even rivalry, which could be fatal to the cause

of NFE. While actual duplication of activities in the same geographical area must be avoided, information about other similar agencies can help in securing their co-operation in setting up non-formal educational programmes.

Recognizing prevailing attitudes, habits and practices related to community life in general and to the proposed NFE programme in particular, specially among the weaker sections, is very important for conducting the community study. This way, the instructor can avoid any blunder in his planning and earn greater acceptance by the community. For example, a non-vegetarian food demonstration before a staunch vegetarian group would be a very serious mistake. The instructor should be in a better position to decide which attitudes and patterns of behaviour in the learners need to be strengthened and which need to be eliminated for a better quality of life, as all forms of non-formal training aim at positive changes in the learner.

Location and Topography

The instructor should know the location of the area where the non-formal classes are to be conducted. He should also be aware of the main and approach roads, transport facilities and the bus-stands and other features like residential areas, shopping areas and recreational areas, not excluding hazardous places like open drains, ravines, etc. Some official agencies have guide-maps which the instructor can consult. There may also be municipal road-signs with the lay-outs of the *mohalla*, and the direction of the roads, for the convenience of outsiders in locating the place. A working map (which need not be to scale) can be easily drawn by the instructor himself by visiting the area before the commencement of the programme.

Community Status

A knowledge of community status is equally important. This includes information about the social and economic status of the people of the area, as also environmental sanitation, health of the people, existing educational, cultural and recreational facilities. One more aspect about the community status which should be kept in mind, is the social

relations amongst the people themselves.

Techniques of Community Study

Proper background information about the community should be known to the instructor, as a pre-requisite for satisfactory implementation of the non-formal programme for education. The information could be acquired through the help of civic bodies, or through personal efforts. They are :

1. Check-list of information to be collected.
2. Contacts with other agencies.
3. Personal study.

These would now be treated in greater detail.

Check-list of information to be collected

For conducting informal surveys of the attitudes of the members of the community to NFE, check-lists of the persons to be interviewed and the questions to be asked, are to be prepared. The persons to be interviewed would be senior citizens, 'key-persons' whose patronage is necessary, and the learners and their family members.

Information about the traditions, practices and prejudices, and information about events which may have a bearing on NFE, can be elicited from the senior citizens. The 'key-persons' can provide information about the resources, problems and priorities, and inter-personal relations within the community. Their co-operation, because of their influence, is needed both for motivating the learners and for a more realistic planning of the programme.

The response of the 'key-persons' must, however, be checked with those of the learners', as, sometimes, response of the key-persons may represent only their personal interests, and not that of the community. For example, a "pressing need" for a TV set voiced by a key-person may actually be needed for his personal entertainment, while the community need may be for a health centre.

Knowledge about various practices, like food-habits, festival celebrations, family interests, economic and social

conditions, and the free time of the learners can be known, so that the classes could be adjusted accordingly.

Both the literates and illiterates may be interviewed with the help of a check-list (Appendix-A). While the literates can fill the forms themselves, the illiterates have to be helped to fill these. Check-lists could be left with the persons to be collected later when they are filled. But forms can be lost, and what is more important is that the interviewer can move the doubts if he or she personally conducts the interviews.

Interviews should be conducted when it is convenient to the persons. Men may be available only in the evening, while women may be free only in the afternoon and children may be free in the morning.

Avoid lengthy interviews, and include only that personal information which the individual can give. Do not ask for information which can be had from other sources. A common error is including questions which pertain to the whole community; for example, the number of schools in the area.

If the communities are repeated for NFE programmes, the profiles of these communities already prepared can be referred to instead of collecting the same information again when another programme is organized. Conducting interviews every time a new programme is organized in the same community cannot only raise suspicion amongst them, but even antagonize them.

Contacts with other Agencies

Contacts should be established with existing agencies who have experience of similar work, or who may also be engaged in community welfare. They can provide valuable information and guidance for help in non-formal work. Such organizations as *mahila* and youth associations, health and family welfare centres, sports and games clubs, and other official and non-official agencies engaged in extension work, can be contacted.

Personal Study

A non-formal instructor should personally read all the literature he can find about the community which could be

useful to him in his work. Local newspapers can provide him significant information about the goings-on in the community, and other events of interest. Pamphlets, books and monographs could provide a critical and in-depth study of the region and the people. District gazetteers are a virtual mine of information—descriptive, economic, social and historical—about almost every place in India, though the information may now be outdated.

Summary

Community study is a must to know the needs, interests, problems, resources, attitudes and practices of the learners and to plan adequate non-formal education programmes for them. Various community study techniques such as referring to area maps, check-lists, observations, personal contacts, contacts with other agencies, and libraries will yield a variety of information and their selection should be made keeping in mind their suitability for the learners and the purpose they are likely to serve.

6

PSYCHOLOGY OF THE NON-FORMAL LEARNERS

Full understanding about the non-formal learners is derived from knowledge of all the aspects of the participants in the programmes. The community studies give information about the physical and social aspects of the communities to which the learners belong. But a knowledge of their *psychology* is equally important. It enables the instructor to be aware of the expectations, attitudes, fears, frustrations, ambitions, and standards of the individual learners. Without knowledge of the psychology of the learners, the instructor will not be able to adapt the instructions to their needs, which will only mean ineffective teaching. Psychological differences amongst the learners, due to disparity in age and other factors, are bound to have an effect on non-formal learning.

Children and Youths

Compared to adults, children and youths have much less experience of things. They are still acquiring physical and mental maturity. Their attitudes towards life, family and community are less serious than those of the adults, though they are much more curious, more eager to know, less cautious and more adventurous than the adults. An instructor can either take these traits as limitations to their learning process, or as assets which can be exploited for their good. A competent instructor can guide the learners to new learning and knowledge without much reference to their past experience, with the help of simple audio-visual aids. They can also be introduced to new ideas and motivated to rise above their present levels.

Children may have no awareness of long-term goals as they are not able to see beyond the present. They do not have any knowledge of what the future holds for them. Yet children and youths can be made aware of the relationship of present learning to what the future holds for them. Young persons from the weaker sections must be encouraged to shake off their attachment to their poor surroundings, and need to be shown the links between literary skills and vocational skills and a higher economic status. Since they may not be greatly burdened with full-time household work or a job, they can be initiated in formal learning and can earn a diploma or a degree to help them face the world.

Children and youths may lack concentration. A combination of activities instead of the same activity at a stretch is to be preferred. For example, a talk and demonstration, instead of a talk alone. Sedentary activities may not interest children and youths. Their abundant energy must be used wisely, choosing subjects and experiences which will include action. Such learning through action, besides motivating them, will also aid in their development. However, the NFE for children and youths from weaker sections cannot be sustained for long compared to persons from the higher socio-economic groups because of the poor nutrition and health status which causes them to feel tired sooner.

Since the children and youths do not have ideas as fixed as the adults do, they can be easily guided to eschew social evils and to acquire a new outlook and ability and to adopt new practices more easily. This is the time when they can be made aware of : (1) social evils, like dowry, superstition, casteism and communalism, (2) new knowledge—scientific and technological advancements which are affecting human life, (3) new abilities, like vocational skills, ability to handle modern equipment, like electronic calculators and small computers, and (4) new practices, like fruit preservation, making clothes for small children and infants, etc.

A new order, a better society and a better world can be brought about through the education of children and youths as they can readily accept changes in thinking and outlook, unlike adults. Children can be more easily handled through the

formal group approach. Healthy competition and other formal incentives also may be employed with non-formal groups of young persons as they have less fear of failure, as compared to adults.

Children and youths are either self or peer-centred while choosing the learning objective and the instruction methods. This psychological principle must be kept in mind. For example, how to improve one's complexion, or how to make one's own garments will be more appropriate goals than how to plan family budgets or how to care for the sick in the family.

Adults

Adults can be far-sighted, and aware of the need to plan for their future. To achieve their goals in life, they can put in concerted and continuous efforts. However, adults are highly selective regarding their purpose in going in for NFE. They would not be interested in trying out anything just for fun. They want quick and concrete benefits out of non-formal learning. They want betterment of their present living rather than preparation for some shadowy benefits later

Only those things which are close to their homes, families, and jobs can interest the adults. Compared to children, their dissatisfaction and concern for their existing socio-economic status are more intense. This point can be utilized to motivate them to go in for non-formal learning, which should elevate their standards. This can be possible only if their abilities and limitations are kept in mind. For example, instead of embroidering a complete border of a *sari*, a corner of a *pallav*, may be embroidered, or, instead of TV repairs, radio repairs can be taken up first.

Adults and instructors

Adults may be of the same age as the non-formal instructors, or even older. They may also be superior in their own domestic skills. Adults are more mature physically, mentally and emotionally in comparison to children. However, as the adult learners can range from 18 to 60 years in age, they can vary considerably among themselves regarding the amount

and kind of experience. Considerable emotional and social poise in handling the class, and a mature relationship, with equal participation in planning and implementing the NFE on the part of the adults will be of great help. The instructor will have to respect them and treat them as his equals. The traditional teacher-dominance which normally works with children and youths, will not be effective with adults. Adults tend to be independent-minded, and so are less comfortable where they are under domination of someone. They already have some practical experience and relate learning to their past. For a lesson on relationships for example, start with a reference to stubborn children; for cooking a particular dish, inquire if they know some methods other than the one demonstrated.

Notions in Adults

Adults, generally, have fixed notions and ideas regarding many things, as their individuality is developed more fully. If they have missed schooling completely in their younger days, they have possibly not developed learning habits. If they have lost contact with learning, because of limited schooling, they may even have forgotten it. At their age, they react to things, persons and experiences, slowly. Therefore, the instructor should be patient, specially when explanations have to be repeated or when they cannot complete the required work either in the class or at home. Age also increases self-consciousness. Competitions, failures, negative opinions and remarks of very personal matters, may all embarrass them, making them reluctant to learn. Punishment, in terms of sarcasm, ridicule or disapproval, discourages the adult learners very much.

Avoid competition of any kind when dealing with adults. Sharp individual appreciation in public will also have to go slow. Have a friendly atmosphere, and get to know their names, and use these while addressing them to help in developing a friendly atmosphere.

Women and Non-formal Classes

Often, the learners, specially women, join the non-

formal classes for a social reason only. It may be to relieve boredom at home or to make new friends. The instructor should maintain a balance between work and social process. For example, while practical classes are going on, there is no harm in allowing them to talk among themselves. They can also be free to form work-groups from among their friends or neighbours.

NFE which interests adults, is part-time and after their working hours. The adults are also pre-occupied with personal, family and job worries and so may be less attentive in the class. They may also be tired because of their many preoccupations and household chores, and may feel impatient with the slow progress, specially if formal procedures are employed. It must be understood by the instructors that the adults who join non-formal classes make a real sacrifice and forego quite a few important things to do so. Their time should be regarded as precious. Such things as formal introductions, registrations, concluding functions, etc., which are normal features in formal education, can be easily eliminated.

Instructors and Adult Learners

Adults demand competent instructors. They develop confidence in learning by the actual success of the programmes. Failure of a food product after a food demonstration will develop distrust in the abilities and methods of the instructor. The adult learners are quick to detect any shortcoming of the teacher. Do not promise anything about which you cannot be sure. For example, do not promise a special talk by an environmentalist unless you are sure that he would definitely be coming to give the talk. Though it is known that vitamin-A is good for the eyes, do not suggest that eye glasses can be discarded after taking vitamin-A-rich food. The instructor has to be particularly careful of such false steps which could bring a bad name to the programme.

Gains From Non-Formal Education

All learners—youths and adults—who belong to the deprived groups would like to gain maximum benefits from the

classes. The gains may not be just intellectual but may also be in a physical form. They can be :

- * A food sample to taste after a food demonstration.
- * Folders, pamphlets and booklets on related topics to take home.
- * Articles, like toys, candles, baby garments, decorative pieces, etc., made during a workshop, to take home with them.
- * Money obtained from selling articles made by the learners in the non-formal class. It could be jams, jellies, sauces or garments.

A most desirable intellectual gain would be the ability to read and write letters not only for oneself but for other family members also. So, plan the programme for immediate and concrete benefits in the maximum number of situations.

Summary

The psychology of the learners varies according to their age, education and socio-economic status. Children and youth can be motivated to work for their future goals through active learning, while adults prefer education for the welfare of their families and present life and on a spare-time basis. All deprived persons want immediate gains from learning.

PLANNING NON-FORMAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMES

In non-formal education, learners must also be associated with the planning of the programmes. If they have a share in major decisions, they are most likely to work for its success. The participants should be consulted in all the major aspects of actual planning of the non-formal education programmes. As the attendance is voluntary and there is no parental or official pressure to attend these courses, the willingness of the participants is absolutely necessary for maximum utilization of the benefits from the non-formal programmes. Disregard of this elementary principle can result in complete failure of the programme or in its disorganization. Major changes in the ongoing programme can also cause much wastage of efforts and in resources. The poor impressions of an ill-conceived programme are likely to persist among the learners and are likely to discourage them from joining future non-formal education programmes.

Subject Matter

Non-formal education programmes must be strictly based on the requirements and interests of the various groups of participants. These can be known through community studies and the guidelines regarding selection of contents for the various groups.

The individual topics need to be planned in accordance with the abilities and the resources of the learners. The two major resources are money and time, and the non-formal learners can be short of both. Unless the expenses are within

the learner's capacity to bear, he or she is not likely to join the non-formal education classes. This will apply particularly to the weaker sections of the society. Of course, the rich and affluent classes will not be affected. These learners, conscious of their higher status, will feel motivated to join mostly those classes which would give them an opportunity to show what they have made to their friends of the same status. Articles made from cheap and shoddy materials can hold no attraction for them as these would have no use for them. That is why, even when there is no class bar in non-formal education, it is advisable not to have mixed classes of persons from different social status, for in not doing so you would be catering to one group and losing the other.

While considering the abilities of the learners, the major hurdle will be their heterogeneous backgrounds due to the absence of uniform formal training. Informal grouping while imparting non-formal education, will help to ease the situation. The capabilities of the learners will differ according to their age, occupation, socio-economic status and sex. These have to be taken into consideration.

Examples

Vision deteriorates with age. Do not give intricate work like embroidery or a book with small type to such persons.

Youths have more strength and stamina than children, women and older persons. So topics involving longer hours of practice would be all right for youths but not for others.

More affluent persons with educational backgrounds, may have developed better literacy skills and other competencies. They should not be asked to replicate them.

People from urban areas, as compared to the rural are more exposed to varied media-experiences which may help them to develop a keener power of observation and the ability to follow complex instructions. Their classes can be held separately and the courses can also differ.

The topics finally selected must reflect the choice of the groups and not the choice of the key-person or the instructor. If choice of the topics is left to the instructor, it may be based on his own personal interest or abilities and will not

reflect the interest of the majority of the group of learners.

Well-organized non-formal education centres established on a permanent basis should offer multiple activities to enable the learners to get introduced to many new activities and to participate in the activities which are most useful for them. For example, the activities could include sewing, book-binding, literacy, health and hygiene and population education.

The familiarity with the place and the people, developed while attending the first non-formal education programme, will motivate them to enroll in programmes in other subjects also, if they are offered at the same place. If possible, short-term popular courses may be offered several times a year, to enable the learners to select the most convenient time for themselves. Topics which can be covered in a shorter duration are to be preferred over programmes needing a longer duration, as the non-formal learners are usually not in a position to make long-term commitments, which may lead to a high rate of dropouts. This will be bad for the programme.

Physical Aspects

Place

Non-formal education classes can be held almost anywhere where space is available. They can be held in community halls, private buildings and even schools and colleges. But an old, dilapidated building, even if it is offered at a very low rent, or is given rent-free, is best avoided because of hazard to the learners.

The ideal premises would be a building specially constructed for the purpose, and located in a central place. In view of the importance being given to non-formal education in the Seventh Five-Year Plan, the educational or civic authorities may be amenable to such a proposal. If the building is to be shared with other organizations, or is to be used for other purposes also, it may require re-scheduling of the non-formal education programme, which will be harmful to the interest of non-formal education. The non-formal classes are bound to be well-attended if they are held within easy reach of the learners, or

However, besides aiming at the inherent motivation of the learners, a well-designed publicity campaign would also be essential.

Publicity

Many non-formal education (NFE) programmes register poor response not because they lack pragmatic value, but because of poor publicity. Timely and informative publicity about the NFE programme will not only make the people aware of it, it will also enable the learners to make intelligent decisions about joining the programmes. Some essential directions for organizing effective publicity are given below :

- * The publicity plan should be drawn with care, intelligence and imagination, to serve its intended purpose. Poor publicity is as good as no publicity.
- * It should communicate overall information about the programme – topics, location, timings, instructors, guest experts, and any other information which could motivate the learners to join the programme.
- * Information about any special or specific meeting needs special publicity.
- * To secure an enthusiastic audience for the programme, the contents of the messages should be simple and direct so that they can be easily grasped by all. Illustrations should be eye-catching, though not necessarily artistic, and suitable for the age-group of the audience, their literacy level and their background, so that the audience feels really involved. For example, a poster for a programme for illiterates should just have a bold illustration, with no writing. Such imaginative publicity will also earn more recognition by word of mouth publicity of the learners who may find the programme fascinating.
- * Display real objects and specimen rather than models and diagrams to avoid wrong ideas about size. An actual baby frock made out of an old shirt would be better publicity than a picture of a frock cut from some magazine for the topic of alteration of clothes.

- * Include folk-media or visual aids as motivational techniques for viewing by whole groups. For example, puppet or film shows are both effective and economical from the point of view of the instructors.
- * Printed publicity materials, like leaflets, pamphlets, brochures, etc. for the literates or where only a few members of the family are literate, serve the useful purpose of reminder and reference for the programme. Printing, though an effective method for producing copies of two-dimensional publicity materials, is very expensive where publicity is aimed at a small group. In which case, such inexpensive and simple methods as cyclostyling, or even silk-screen printing (which also reproduces colours) can be used.
- * Use the psychological approach for effective publicity. For example, emphasize better health care and hygiene during an epidemic of jaundice, gastro-enteritis or malaria.
- * Do not make false claims. Names of guest speakers, or a particular film, etc., should be announced only after full confirmation. Otherwise, the learners lose faith in non-formal programmes.

Implementing the Publicity Plan

Even the most elaborate plan for publicity may become a fiasco if it is not implemented properly.

- * Publicity for the NFE programmes must be done at the right time, at the right place and in the right manner. Otherwise, the publicity may fail in motivating the people to attend or join non-formal classes.
- * Both too early or too late publicity of a programme will be equally ineffective. If too early, the persons may forget about it, and if it is too late, they may have already made some other plan. The overall programme for NFE can be announced two to three weeks in advance, while an individual meeting can be announced three or four days earlier.
- * Both group and mass-publicity media can be advantag-

ously used at the time of fairs, *melas* and festivals when people, in large or small groups have already gathered.

- * The help of youths, men and women can also be sought for putting up posters, exhibits, bulletin boards, and for distributing pamphlets or leaflets.
- * Public places, like parks, shopping centres, religious places and bus stands, where groups of potential learners are likely to come, can be used for putting up the publicity materials. However, it may be necessary to get permission of the concerned authorities before doing so, to avoid any objection from them.
- * Safety of the posters put up at public places must be kept in mind. Unless the security of the posters is assured, they are likely to be torn down or mutilated even before the people have seen them.
- * If not reminded frequently—education not being on their priority list—the learners, specially from the weaker sections, may forget to attend the non-formal classes. Other activities, like kite-flying or holding gas lamps during marriage processions, may seem more attractive than the educational classes. This could be countered by supplementary publicity. Even after putting up an attractive poster, an oral announcement or reminder in the previous class can be of help.
- * Once the publicity has been done, no change should be made in the actual programme unless it is absolutely unavoidable. Too many changes in the programme reflect lack of sincere planning and foresight.
- * Begin and end the programmes as announced.

Summary

Several things must be kept in mind while planning the non-formal education programmes. They can be the expressed needs and interests, abilities and SES of the learners. The physical aspects, requiring very careful planning are place, time and resources. Motivation is a psychological aspect requiring effective publicity of the non-formal programme to motivate the learners.

INSTRUCTORS FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Instructors are the backbone of all non-formal education programmes. The success of planning and execution of the programmes of non-formal education depends completely on the quality, excellence, and what is more important, on the dedication of the instructors. The instructors need to be the right persons for carrying out the programmes and should be selected with the greatest care.

Criteria for Selecting Instructors

Naik (1980) is of the opinion that self-trained voluntary social workers are more successful than formally trained university graduates because of the pragmatic approach of the former towards the problems faced by the learners. Such instructors are also likely to have prior experience of the difficulties they are likely to face in dealing with persons from different socio-economic groups. Any kind of extension work involves physical discomfort, even some hardships. Therefore, a person who knowingly chooses to face the rigours of non-formal education work will have much more zeal and dedication than a person from a college who might have taken extension work out of sheer compulsion and whose knowledge about it may be limited to the contents of the compulsory curriculum. The person may not actually be interested in non-formal education or in working for the poor—the work may even be distasteful for some.

Social workers as instructors

A high level of dedication and motivation for the uplift of the poor and the lowly, to be found in social workers makes them the right choice as instructors for non-formal education. They can even make up for some deficiencies in training and resources through improvisation, specially in dealing with the weaker sections. If the instructor belongs to a family of lower socio-economic status, or has worked amongst them, he or she would be acquainted with the background, habits and attitudes of the learners, and the host of problems in motivating them and in sustaining their interest. This is likely to be absent in instructors from higher socio-economic status.

If the instructor and the learners belong to the same community, the instructor will not only be familiar with them, but will also have sympathy and respect for the deprived, and will strive to work for the uplift of the poor through education. Quite likely, it may be difficult to find such persons.

The non-formal education instructors are usually higher in status than the poor. Not many of them can identify with the poor, or win their confidence and establish a rapport with them. Thus, if a person of higher socio-economic status becomes an instructor for the deprived sections of the society, it is essential that the person must not look down upon these learners. The instructor has to be aware that the lack of self-confidence and poor response to learning, at times, is due to economic factors beyond the control of the learners. This applies more to women than men. A major task for the instructor is to help the learners to develop confidence and self-respect in themselves.

The instructor has the additional obligation to strive for acceptance by the community and must accept the learners, even if they are from the weaker sections, as persons who are capable of learning and who can be educated. As a rule, the instructor should be interested in the general welfare of the community and the learners. A study of the community will help the instructor to acquire familiarity with the people of the community and a conscientious effort will enable him to establish the much needed rapport with the people and to win their respect.

A non-formal teacher should have commitment to social change not only at the planning stage but also throughout the execution of the programme. If the person is not dedicated to the cause of real development, he or she cannot be a success in making non-formal education play its role in building a strong local leadership and in developing consciousness among the weaker sections. The instructor should feel personally involved in his teaching work. Many individuals detest the actual teaching, specially teaching non-formal classes. They join the teaching profession only for want of a better job. This should be regarded as a disqualification. An instructor for non-formal teaching needs to possess qualities like self-confidence and dedication, and the knowledge and skills necessary to run the non-formal classes.

Difference between formal and non-formal education instructors

Unlike the teachers of formal education, a non-formal instructor has to deal with groups with much diversity in age, experience, ability and qualifications. He should be willing to receive training to deal with such groups through individualized and group instruction, if he lacks these qualities.

A non-formal education teacher is a link between the learners, specially the deprived ones, and the community and its resources. The instructor must introduce them to other agencies of learning as well. The instructor should get them acquainted with other services in the community which may help the learners to raise their socio-economic status. For example, the instructor could help in employment, loans, marketing, health, and social and recreational facilities. This can be done either through field-trips or by inviting experts to talk to the non-formal classes. Seth and others (1983) report the positive and negative qualities of the adult educators as revealed by the participants of nine centres run by voluntary organizations. The participants were of the view that the adult education teachers must initiate other educational activities as well. The women participants appreciated the teachers' identification with the profession, their faith in the capabilities of the participants, regularity in taking classes, and good rapport with the participants, the children and the

community. They disliked those who had airs of superiority and treated the learners with indifference or disdain.

Training Programme for non-formal education instructors

Seth and others (1983) point out, in their study on "Behaviour Pattern of Education" the need for training personnel both in the planning and implementation of the non-traditional approach of teaching adults. Such a procedure calls for a good training programme for instructors, and particularly for supervisors, whose main role is to conduct continuously on-the-job training of instructors.

The non-formal education teachers, like other teachers, should have a thorough understanding of the learners and the group techniques, methods, etc. The teachers should also be able to relate it to the purposes of the students. The basic facts and principles for both formal and non-formal education for teachers and instructors are identical—only their application differs. This book deals only with the application aspects.

Summary

Persons with true dedication and motivation make ideal teachers for the non-formal education programmes. Those with similar socio-economic backgrounds tend to understand the learners. The professional qualities of the non-formal instructors are genuine liking for teaching, commitment to social change, thorough subject matter knowledge and skill in individual and the group instruction techniques. They should act as a link between the non-formal learners, specially of the deprived sections and the other educational and developmental agencies and opportunities to grow.

METHODS AND MATERIALS FOR NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Learners under the non-formal education (NFE) differ from the learners under the formal system of education, regarding their background, resources and motivation. The traditional classroom teaching methods used for the formal groups may not be equally effective with them. The methods used for NFE must be suited to the heterogenous backgrounds of the non-formal learners, their slow motivation, and the limited time they have for education. The teacher-oriented methods such as formal class lectures will not work as effectively as the learner-oriented methods used in NFE. The methods ensuring maximum informal participation of the learners—methods such as workshops and talks *cum* demonstration—are the most appropriate methods for NFE. These methods appeal to the learners as they take into consideration the limitations of the non-formal learners.

Methods

Methods that permit interaction, involvement and opportunities to express oneself should be chosen for non-formal teaching. One method alone will not serve the instructional requirements, because of the wide range of individual differences among the groups and within the groups themselves. A combination of two or more methods will be effective for larger groups of individuals who seek varying objectives from NFE. As an example, instead of only a lecture, have both lecture and open discussion, instead of a demonstration alone, a demonstration and a workshop can be conducted side by side.

Guidance for Non-Formal Education

Some directions for NFE are suggested here for optimum effectiveness of non-formal teaching.

Informality is fundamental to non-formal instruction and it can be ensured by the instructor through different methods. Three of the most common methods of maintaining informality in non-formal classes are through encouraging : (1) questions by the learners even when the classes are in progress, (2) participation of the learners in discussions, and (3) learners choosing their own partners in group work.

Class arrangement

The room arrangement for the non-formal classes must reinforce informality. A flexible arrangement of the furniture will permit many activities and the use of various methods of instruction. However, informality should not be confused with lack of neatness, and absence of organization and control. The room or hall should be made both attractive and inviting. Charts, posters, pictures and exhibits relevant to the programme, should be tastefully arranged. Some arrangements for storage and display, like peg-boards, or open racks, are a must for NFE centres. Reading materials, with attractive covers, on topics of community interest, or inspirational literature, should be displayed on open shelves, which the learners can freely read.

Too many books, on too many topics, can confuse the learners and can encourage mutilation and book-lifting.

Advance Preparation

Wherever possible, advance preparations must be done by the instructor to save time of the class and to ensure smooth running of the classes. For example, extra copies of designs, diagrams, recipes and written instructions must be prepared in advance. Altering the seating arrangements, or making a diagram on the chalk-board should also be done before the class assembles.

However, there are some situations where advance preparation may not be feasible and may defeat its own purpose; for example, demonstrating the preparation of fruit syrup

requiring peeling, boiling and stirring for a considerable length of time (to reach the desired consistency) cannot be done in the class because of the time it would take to go through all the steps. Also, some processes may be so complex—silk-screen printing, for example—that the entire process has to be carried out in front of the class to be properly followed and understood. However, there are two ways to overcome this problem :

1. Let an assistant continue with the time consuming work (like stirring) while the instructor takes up the next item.
2. Prepare examples of the basic steps in advance to shorten the time for classroom demonstration. For example, to demonstrate stencil printing, have ready samples of the design, as tracing takes time. Also have the cut-out design as stencil cutting is equally tedious. Samples of the end product—waxed and dried design—must also be kept prepared to show the final steps.

Besides showing the ready-made samples, an actual demonstration of each step must be shown to the class. Time is saved, without loss of clarity for the learners by demonstrating how to cut a small portion of the stencil and showing the sample of the fully pre-cut design for waxing.

Precautions

Precautions must be taken against any anticipated problem, which can often occur during the course of non-formal teaching. Some problems, however, cannot be foreseen : a tyre of a jeep or bus suddenly burst and the instructor can be stranded. But some difficulties can be anticipated, and alternative arrangements promptly made. Power cuts, gas supply running out during a cooking demonstration, more persons than expected turning up for class with the result that persons sitting at the back cannot properly see the processes being carried out, are some of the common occurrences which can be anticipated.

If NFE is planned with care, such usual problems can be promptly tackled without disrupting the classes. An alert instructor should always be prepared with an alternative.

Some of the usual problems and how to deal with them, are as follows :

<i>Problems</i>	<i>Suggested alternatives</i>
* Projected aids cannot be used because of a power cut.	Use a set of charts, or flash-cards on the same topic.
* Gas-lighter not working.	Use a matchbox.
* Gas supply running out.	Keep a kerosene stove as a stand-by.
* More persons than expected come to attend the class.	Additional chairs, <i>daris</i> , or bigger work-groups.
* Fewer persons than were expected.	Smaller work-groups or individuals working separately.
* Edible oil is too expensive for deep frying.	Shallow frying or just a <i>vaghar</i> can serve the purpose.
* Minor burns and bruises due to contact with hot pans.	Keep antiseptic ointment and band-aids handy.

Pass around only a small quantity of hot liquid sample in unbreakable containers, with the name of the product indicated on the containers, for closer inspection by the learners. This helps to avoid accidents due to spilling, or burning of the mouth through taking a big gulp.

For slow learners

- Learners attending non-formal classes may correlate ideas slowly, due to a lack of formal learning habits. It is, therefore, desirable to have a central idea for each lesson, which should be repeated through words, actions and with the help of

equipment and appliances. For example, for the concept of efficiency through time and labour-saving procedures, the following technique can be followed :

- * Demonstrate time and labour-saving appliances.
- * Use work method to reduce steps.
- Use the words 'time and labour-saving' several times in the explanations during the talk.

Logical presentation of the subject-matter, with clear steps, also helps the learners in grasping the matter correctly. Short units, with the preceding unit having clear links with the later one are ideal for oral communication. Frequent repetition of explanations, procedures and ideas is necessary. Reviews, conclusions and summaries of what has been taught take care of irregular attendance and of individuals with varying learning abilities.

Adults with poor eye-sight and hearing problems

Adult and senior learners often have vision and hearing problems. They can be helped to overcome these handicaps by taking the following steps, which, if followed, can benefit others as well.

For deteriorating vision or defective eye-sight

- * Use glare-free lighting. Natural light is the best. Avoid very bright lights.
- * For talks and demonstrations, a semi-circular arrangement of seating enables all the learners to be quite close to the instructor and the visual materials.
- * Only relevant materials and equipment need be displayed to avoid confusing the handicapped learners.
- * Have a plain and neutral background so that everything being demonstrated by the instructor can be plainly seen.
- * Use clear contrast in colours : avoid soft and merging shades as they interfere with seeing things clearly.
- * Use uncomplicated graphic aids with large lettering and block letters rather than running script, as they are easier to read.

- * Pass around samples for closer individual observation or let the learners come nearer the demonstration table to see things with greater clarity.
- * Use only bold mimeographed materials or if xerographic facilities are available, use line drawings also.

For impaired hearing

- * Speak clearly and slowly and with a loud voice.
- * Use only simple language and vary the tone on occasions.
- * Repeat explanations, using different words.
- * Seating arrangements should be such that the teacher can always visually monitor the learners to see if they are being attentive.
- * Oral talks should be combined with suitable visuals.
- * Learners should also be able to see the instructor to enable them to better follow what is being taught.
- * There should be minimum of outside and inside noise. If possible, select a time when there is hardly any outside noise. Avoid adult classes on Saturday afternoons when children would mostly be at play.
- * Discourage learner. from discussing their own experiences loudly in the class, thus disturbing others. They should be politely told not to do so.
- * Older children should not be encouraged to accompany their parents as they are most likely to create noise and disturbance. If possible, those children may be provided with their own alternative activities in the adjoining room or porch. to keep them occupied.

Without sacrificing the basic principles of teaching, the instructor can, with a little ingenuity and understanding, adapt the mode of instruction best suited to his own situation. Though an ideal group for a workshop is of 20 to 25 persons, 50 to 60 persons can be taken care of by dividing the learners into two or three groups according to their level of intelligence, with a help of an assistant instructor.

The first group may consist of absolutely ignorant learners, the second would be of persons who have some basic knowledge but feel diffident and are not sure of themselves.

The persons of the third group would be quite well informed, but want to be instructed in more advanced ideas. The first group should be handled by the chief instructor who should give both individual and group guidance. The second and third groups can be managed by an associate instructor or instructors, through group demonstration, visual aid to show various steps and a quick round of checking that the members of the group are on the right track. Out of several methods of teaching, some appear to be more appealing and effective for NFE. These are : (1) demonstrations, (2) workshops, (3) illustrated talks, (4) group discussions, and (5) dramatised presentation.

Demonstration

In a demonstration, the instructor shows how to carry out a process or how to use an appliance or equipment. For example :

- * How to do 'tie-and-dye', batik, garment-stitching or toy-making.
- * How to use an electric iron, pressure cooker or knitting machine.

An oral explanation becomes easier to understand through demonstration. It can be used by itself or it can be combined with a talk or a workshop. Examples are :

- * A talk on the care of hair combined with a demonstration on making a shampoo.
- * A workshop on flower decoration can follow a demonstration of paper-flower making.

Sometimes, one step can be demonstrated and can be immediately carried out by the group before the demonstration of the next step, which is also carried out by the group.

A good and proper demonstration requires systematic planning regarding all details—ingredients needed, demonstration arrangements, equipment including visual aids, seating arrangement, explanations to be given, logical presentation of

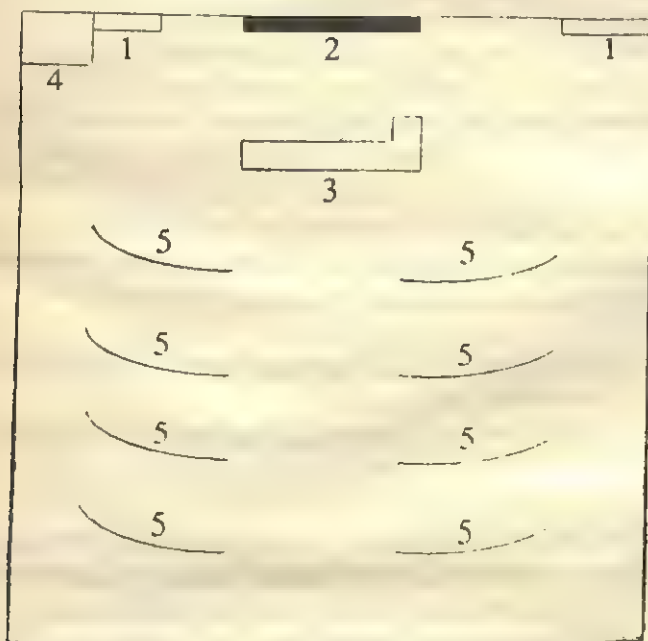
the demonstration and the total time taken for it.

Any demonstration in a non-formal way of teaching can be divided into two major parts : (1) advance preparation, and (2) actual demonstration. Without advance preparation, the instructor is most likely to waste much of the audience's time and could even bungle his demonstration.

Advance Preparation

Advance preparation should include :

- * Listing and collecting all the required materials and tools.
- * Preparing, or borrowing visual aids, samples, and final products.
- * Arranging the classroom for demonstration—attending to seating and lighting.
- Semi-circular seating arrangement (see Figure 1).



- | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| 1. Bulletin Board | 2. Black Board | 3. Demonstration Table |
| 4. Sink | 5. Table/Dari | |

Fig. 1 Room Arrangement for Demonstration

- * Arranging materials and tools in the order needed on the demonstration table.
- * Checking the equipment and appliances for proper working condition.
- * Checking facilities like gas, water, electricity and fans.
- * Arrangements for display of visual aids.
- Completing time-consuming routine processes, like cutting, washing or boiling. These can again be demonstrated on a smaller scale during class demonstration. For example, for a demonstration on making stuffed tomatoes, cutting the tomatoes in a particular way and keeping the filling and stuffing ready.

Visual Aids

Visual aids can be actual specimens, or objects representing raw materials and final products, graphic aids, like charts, diagrams, flash cards and flannelographs, to aid the explanations. Some examples are :

- * Specimens of cloth, paper and food ingredients.
- * Charts about nutritive values of various foods.
- Real objects showing various possibilities : unbaked cake, burnt cake and properly baked cake.
- Diagrams of sewing machine and bodice-blocks.

Actual Demonstration

Introduce the topic by stating the purpose, outlining the key-points, importance of the topic, before demonstrating the actual process.

- * Present the steps in a logical order, slowly, confidently and clearly, so that everyone in the class can see and follow.
- * Involve the learners by encouraging their participation in the demonstration, wherever possible.
- * Co-ordinate actions with explanations.
- * The doubts of the learners should be removed during the demonstration itself. Do not wait till the end of the class to do so.

- * A summary will help in better understanding and in retention of the information.

Workshop

The workshop method is more effective than a demonstration, as the learners get personally involved in learning by doing. Unlike the demonstration method in which the learners are usually passive observers, in a workshop, the learners themselves, in groups, prepare the article, or articles, under the guidance of the instructor.

Groups

For the success of a workshop, the learners should be divided into groups of 15 to 20. However, if some additional instructors are available, the groups can be bigger.

Unless constant vigilance is exercised, learners are liable to make mistakes which it may not be possible to correct afterwards, for example incorrect cutting of a blouse will mean complete waste of the cloth-piece. For better guidance and supervision, therefore, smaller groups are more desirable. Also non-formal learners sometimes lack basic skills and have a degree of diffidence and are unsure of themselves so that they cannot do anything independently. For this reason also, smaller groups, which ensure greater supervision and more personal attention, are more desirable for workshops.

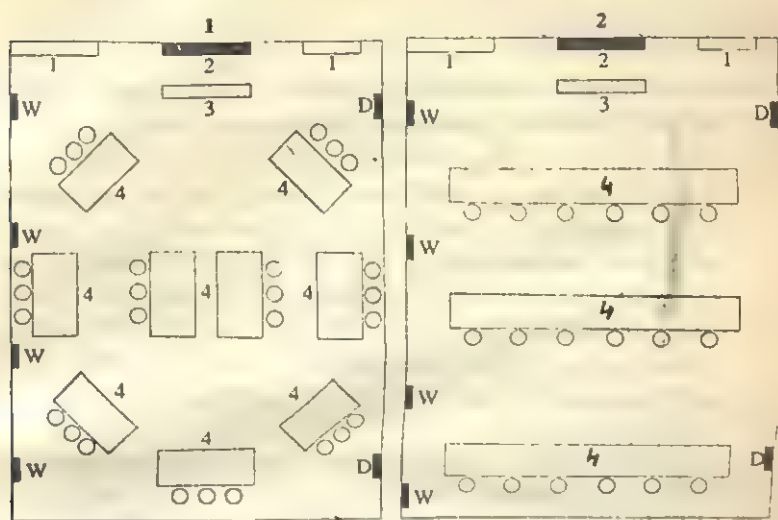
Advance Preparation for a Workshop

The learners must be shown the end product and told about the time, cost and the work involved in preparing the article, before they are asked to prepare it themselves. If it is not done, the persons may drop out half way through the workshop or feel cheated and refrain from joining such workshop in future.

Seating arrangements with greater aisle space will allow freer movement for the instructor and will facilitate both individual and group guidance. The groups will also benefit by being able to see the instructor and get his guidance easily.

Learners can sit around the tables, on chairs or benches. They can also squat on *daris* depending on the resources

available. All the equipment, material and visual aids must be kept in readiness. (See Figure 2).



1. Bulletin Board 2. Black Board 3. Teacher's Table 4. Table/Dari

Fig. 2 Room Arrangement for Workshop

Learners must be instructed in advance about what materials or tools they have to bring with them to the class. The materials can also be bought in bulk for the convenience of the learners, by the instructor, or some key-person on the firm assurance that the cost would be promptly paid by the learners.

Divide the whole work of making an article into specific steps and plan the lessons with proper breaks, so that the time-consuming processes, once started under supervision, can be completed by way of homework. For example, a decorative *asan* (mat for sitting) made from left-over pieces of coloured cloth can be demonstrated in the class. The learners can start making a similar item in the class to be completed at home before the next class. More complicated work, like sewing the floral patterns and piping can be done in the next class, under the supervision of the instructor. If nothing new is planned for the next class and there is nothing new to be learnt, it will register very low attendance. A mere continuation of what

is taught in the first, may not motivate the learners to come to the next class.

Conducting Workshops

For conducting a successful workshop for the non-formal learners, the following procedures are recommended :

- * Explain the purpose of the workshop, the use of materials, equipment, and tools. The instructor may give a complete demonstration at the commencement of the workshop, using his own appliances and materials or may pick up different individuals' things and demonstrate the various steps as the workshop proceeds. Doing and explaining one step at a time, prevents forgetting and making mistakes.
- * The whole class may be divided into smaller groups to facilitate individual guidance and supervision. Individual differences can be taken care of through small groups of like-minded persons, and diversity of work allotted. However, the groupings according to the abilities of the individuals must be done very tactfully so as not to hurt the feelings of the learners.

Examples of groups for baking cakes

Group I — Not knowing how to bake cakes at all.

Group II — Knowing the basic process but still needing guidance.

Group III — Knowing how to make cakes, but wanting to know more about decorating cakes.

Quick checking of each individual's work frequently, will be far more rewarding than giving detailed guidance to one individual and then moving to another. If quick guidance is not provided to all, the class can get impatient. They may leave their respective places, and gather around the instructor, and create chaos and disorganization. Encourage the class to concentrate on their own work, and to avoid talking, which would disturb others.

Illustrated Talk

A talk, though considered the most passive method of instruction, as it is oral only, is still indispensable for teaching and is widely followed. When considerable information has to be communicated within a time-limit, specially on topics new to the learners, talks are particularly useful. In fact, it may be the only mode of communication in the circumstance. Examples of topics which can be best expounded by talks are :

- * Family-planning methods.
- * Importance of education of girls.
- * Prevention of communicable diseases.
- * Environmental pollution and health.
- * Income-generating activities for women.
- * Moral or religious discourses.

The major problem with a talk is that learners mostly find talks abstruse, and so, uninteresting. But a teacher can so enliven the talk that learners would actually come to *listen* to it. Such a talk will not only sustain the interest of the listeners, but can even provide much food for thought which can affect their life and way of living in a positive way. How can this be done ? Usefulness, clarity and enjoyability are the three things which ensure the success of a talk.

Talks should be brief. Long, and 'unending' talks have quite the opposite effect on the listener. They may even leave while the lecturer is still giving the talk. Combine a talk with a demonstration or a workshop. This will automatically shorten the duration of the talk. For example, a talk on the importance of milk and vegetables in the diet with a demonstration on making cottage cheese, or vegetable sandwiches.

- * Plan the talk with liberal use of visual aids, like slides, filmstrips, charts, diagrams, etc.
- * The topic must be of direct usefulness and relevance to the audience; health care for the working women, for women who are already employed or seeking a job.
- * Give correct information collected from authentic sources to create faith in your talk.

- * The contents of the talk must be presented in a logical order.
- * Use simple language, with simple words and short sentences which can be easily understood and grasped by all.
- * Visual check over, as many members of the audience as possible, is desirable. Besides, with nobody feeling ignored, the lecturer also gets feed-back about the effectiveness of the talk.
- * Questions from the audience at the end of the talk should be welcomed. This serves to clarify the doubts of the audience, if any.

Group Discussion

There are many problems which are common to quite a number of persons. By discussing them together, their causes, roots, extent and solutions can be thrashed out. In a group discussion, members contribute by exposing their individual ideas, knowledge and experiences. The members of the group, thus, come to appreciate the viewpoints of others, and often arrive at a mutually agreed solution. Some problems which can best be tackled through group-discussion method are :

- * Economic problems—how to plan expenditure with a limited budget.
- * Family matters—distribution of property, hostility among brothers.
- * Social evils—dowry, superstition, drug abuse, molestation of girls.
- * Community problems—environmental pollution, misuse of public amenities, corruption, unemployment, etc.
- * Educational problems—illiteracy, youth unrest and education, homework burden on children.
- * Political matters—discussion on political matters should, as far as possible, be avoided, though such topics as national integration, patriotism and nation-building may be taken up for discussion.

Group discussion and the teacher

The success of group discussion will depend largely on the

teacher. His role in group discussion is very crucial. He has to initiate the discussion, act as a moderator, and bring the participants to order if the discussion gets heated. He has also to see that irrelevant, communal and political controversies are not introduced in the discussion. Group discussion is not a debate—the aim of discussion is to arrive at a consensus through thrashing out all the various aspects of the topic. The teacher will have the following duties as well :

- * Selection of a topic of interest for the entire community which can be tackled through discussion. However, the choice of topics for youth, men and women can be different.

EXAMPLES

For youths : youth unrest, employment, national work.

For women and girls : low status of women, maltreatment of daughters-in-law.

For boys and men : environment and health, drug abuse, drinking and gambling, and how to fight these evils.

- * Informing the learners in advance about the topic and tentatively deciding the points which the participants will be presenting.
- * Keeping the discussion going. Encouraging the silent members and restraining those who may be monopolizing the discussion.
- * Conducting the discussion in an organized manner. While the views of all must be heard and respected, all members should not be allowed to speak at the same time.

The consensus arrived at should be acceptable to the entire community.

Dramatized Presentation

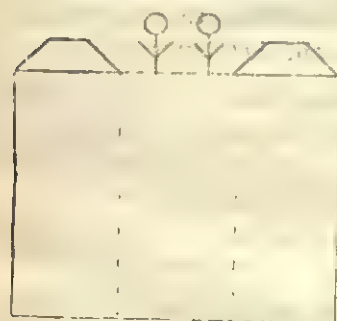
Various forms of extempore dramas—role play, socio-drama, and puppetry can serve as an excellent method of teaching subjects involving personal problems, social actions and inter-personal relations. The group participation is maximum for those among the learners who play the various

roles, or act as puppeteers. Puppets have universal appeal; they appeal to children and grown-ups alike. Both the illiterates and the literates, particularly persons from rural backgrounds enjoy puppet shows immensely. The formal dramatized presentation, however, appeals only to mature persons.

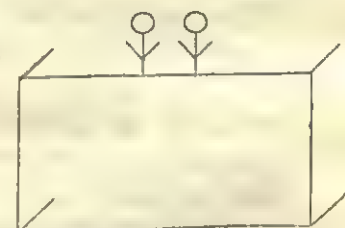
Dramatized presentation for non-formal education, requires no elaborate stage arrangements, or lighting; even rehearsals are not needed. The limitations are that dramatized presentations require persons with some histrionic abilities and a good voice, who can impart 'life' to play-acting.

Puppets

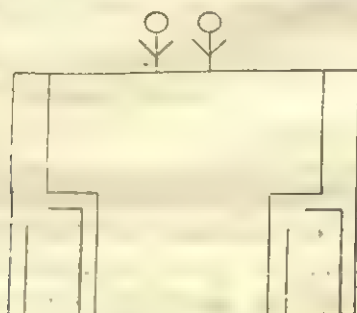
Puppets can be easily made from waste, or left-over materials. Glove and rod puppets are very easy to prepare and to operate. No special training is required to operate the simple string-puppets. The stage for a puppet show can be very easily improvised (See Figure 3).



Two Pillars



Inverted Charpoi/Table



Two Chairs

Fig. 3 Improvised Puppet Stages

Materials

Learners grasp the concrete experience more easily than the abstract idea. The five senses—sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste—make understanding of concrete and material things possible. But these cannot be used with abstract and non-material things, for example: human intelligence. Even concrete experience cannot always be presented in the classroom for the learners to see, touch and feel. The Himalayas, which are so interlinked with our history and culture, cannot be presented in the class as a concrete reality.

The visual and aural aids in teaching come nearest to the concrete experience in the learning process; even abstract and non-material ideas can be presented through them in a very easily understandable form. The audio-visual aids make the learning process clearer, simpler, and more interesting, and thereby bring about effective and lasting learning.

Audio-visual Aids

Audio-visual aids have a special significance for the learners who come from different backgrounds, and have varying abilities and experiences. These materials help the learners to build a common platform of experience and to proceed from there to the abstract and non-material aspects of learning. The audio-visual aids mostly used in teaching are :

- * Graphic aids - charts, diagrams, flashcards, pictures and photographs.
- * Displays—exhibits, chalk-boards, bulletin boards, flannel-boards and peg-boards.
- * Three dimensional aids—actual objects, specimen models, and puppets.
- * Projected aids—slides, filmstrips, motion picture films, and now also television and videotapes.

Graphic Aids

Graphic aids are two-dimensional aids to learning which have only length and breadth, but no depth. They are mostly used to present information through eye-catching writing and illustrations. They also assist in verbal explanations. They

can be used in almost every context to present data, to show similarities, differences and relationships, and to emphasize points and ideas. They are comparatively inexpensive, easy to make, use and store. Moreover, they are portable, and can be used again and again. Though regarded as traditional—they are amongst the oldest teaching aids—their use for teaching is still more than any other teaching aid.

While selecting or preparing graphic aids, the following points must be kept in mind by the instructor :

- * Graphic aids must carry correct and authentic information.
- * Present one idea at a time.
- * Graphic aids must suit the age, intelligence and background of the learners.
- * Graphic aids should have neat, simple, but bold lettering and illustrations so that they could be followed even from some distance.
- * Use colour only for clarity, contact or emphasis, and not for attraction.

Displays

Chalk-boards break the monotony of the talk which is mostly abstract. These can be very easily used with the talk as an aid in explanation during the course of a lesson. It is quite simple to acquire the art of using the chalk-board, drawing and writing upon it. Exhibits, bulletin-boards and flannel-boards serve the dual purpose of arousing the interest of the learners and of presenting the information, specially for the children and the illiterate groups.

Exhibits are three-dimensional displays. They motivate the learners by their realistic three-dimensional presentation. They can be arranged before the start of the lessons and reference can be made to them during teaching. Flannel-boards can be used very effectively to tell a story or to present a set of steps in a pleasant manner, during a lesson. Both help to present materials of which there is only one example, for the entire group. Dresses of other regions, original pieces of art and handicrafts, even electrical and mechanical appliances, can be

used as display materials. For day to day instruction, easily available materials, like models, pictures and photographs, with just a short caption, can be arranged in a simple way.

Background for display

Use a plain pastel, and unpatterned background for display so that the exhibits stand out prominently. A limited number of exhibits, tastefully arranged, will make a greater impact on the viewers than the display cluttered with exhibits of every sort which make both viewing and identifying confusing. Captions should be written in black ink in bold letters. Ornamental and decorative lettering should not be used, also avoid vertical or slanting captions. Illustrations could be in colour, but they should be large enough to go with the display.

Three-dimensional aids

Some real and material experiences are not possible for every one. For example, not everyone can visit a foreign country and see how the people there live and dress, or what they eat. Not many people have seen wild animals in their natural habitat. How the silk-worm produces silk or how polyester fibres are made would be a mystery to many, though such experiences could be good education, for these could provide direct information. Still such direct experiences, even those invaluable, have their limitations. Except for the specialists, or official surveys, comparative, detailed and patient study cannot be possible in many cases, at least for the non-formal learners. For example, a non-formal learner cannot make a comparative study of the Japanese and Mughal gardens, as one is located in Japan and the other in Kashmir. Even in one's own count, such comparative studies would be virtually impossible. A Punjabi kitchen cannot be transported to a non-formal class in Gujarat to provide direct material experience of the interior of a Punjabi kitchen so that a detailed study could be possible, and a comparison with a Gujarati kitchen-made.

Nevertheless, it can still be done through replication. Replicas, or models of the real things can be made to provide

virtually the same experience for the non-formal learners, in the class itself. In some cases, they may even be an improvement on the original. A plaster model of a mosquito would be much more effective as a teaching aid than a real mosquito.

Objects

Objects are real things which help in developing correct concepts and understanding of things. Pressure cookers, mixers, electric irons, fruit and vegetables, spices and condiments, sewing machines, etc., are all objects, some of which the learners may even be taught to use and thereby acquire practical experience of their operation and working.

Specimens

A specimen on the other hand, can be: (1) part of an actual object, for example, leaves or a piece of cloth, or (2) a group of similar objects and materials, like household pets, garments, cooked meals, and various types of buttons and fasteners. Specimen can be used when the real objects are too expensive or too difficult to bring to the classroom. A collection of dry objects and specimen collected from homes, or manufacturers, will help a non-formal instructor in teaching work.

Models

Models differ from the real things in the size and material. Models may either be smaller or bigger than the original, both of which make understanding easy. An architect generally makes a small model of a new building so that the client can form an idea of how the completed building will actually look, and all suggested changes can be easily made at much less cost. Large models of insects, or the insides of a human organ—for example, the eye, or ear—can make it much more easy and convenient to understand the working of the human eye, or how a person hears. Real human organs cannot obviously be used for this purpose in the class. Of course, these models are made of plaster and realistically coloured, and are not of flesh and blood. All such models need to be presented in the class in good condition, with explanation

about the reduced or enlarged size and weight, to avoid misconception amongst the learners.

Projected aids

Projected aids provide maximum realism to the learning situation. In fact, it is said that they bring the world inside the classroom. They can be 'still' or 'moving'. Slides, and filmstrips are examples of 'still' projected aids. They can also be in colour or in simple black and white. They are generally silent and the teacher can provide his or her own commentary. Other advantages with slides and filmstrips are that they cost much less, the image can be held on the screen for as long as desired and the projection equipment is also very simple to operate. A more detailed study can, thus, be made.

Moving pictures

Moving pictures are another type of projected aids which present reality in actual motion and with sound, and thus, bring virtually direct communication and experience in the class. These are motion picture films and now video and television. They help to build common levels of experience for a group of learners even if they come from varied backgrounds. Abstract and obscure topics which would be difficult to communicate in the class, like national integration, conservation of natural resources, slums and unhealthy living conditions, possible results of uncontrolled population, social evils, industrial development, etc., can be taught easily through these aids. Development of positive attitudes and change in negative attitudes can be brought about through them.

Motion picture films also permit visual comprehension of some realities which would not otherwise be possible. Through 'time-lapse' or 'slow-motion' photography, it can be possible to see the actual process of the germination of a seed, or to analyse the movement in a high jump. One drawback of these motion pictures is that as they are made by professional agencies, some of them foreign, the spoken words may not be understood by the learners.

Sound Recordings

Sound Recordings have been in existence for quite a long time, though their application as teaching aids is comparatively recent. The sound recordings may be in the form of a disc or a tape which is to be played through suitable equipment. For some experiences, sound recording can be ideal. For example : the sound of animals in the jungle, or singing of birds, great speeches, local dialects, vanishing folk-music, and learning a foreign language can only be done through sound recordings. Tapes have the added advantages that they can be made by the instructor himself, used as many times as desired, and then erased for another programme. The equipment for making an audio-tape is comparatively cheap.

Besides previewing and auditioning of these aids to check their suitability for classroom use, other physical factors, like power-supply, adequate ventilation, seating arrangement, working condition of the projector and other equipment must be checked before the start of the programme.

Educational films, filmstrips, and sometimes slides too are available on loan from government publicity offices, foreign embassies, and other educational institutions. They are also available through commercial agencies and film societies who may charge a rental fee. The terms and conditions of loan of the film, which are quite strict, must be checked before requesting a loan. Thirty-five mm slides and filmstrips can even be made by an instructor to suit his own group need. Professional video-films are now becoming popular, though they are still mostly used for entertainment. Educational videotapes are still a rarity in India.

Video programmes of high professional quality can be directly recorded through a TV set by means of a VCR, and replayed through the TV. Many fine educational programmes are daily shown on the TV.

The biggest hindrance to a more extensive use of these audio-visual aids is the very high cost of the good quality equipment.

Duplicated Materials

The group of duplicated materials include leaflets, folders,

brochures, pamphlets and booklets. These may be printed or as is most often the case, duplicated on the premises by simpler reprographic techniques. Recipes, instructions about using the equipment and appliances, directions for operating a washing machine. etc., can be produced in the quantity desired and in a language understood by the class, and distributed free of cost or at a very nominal price. One great advantage of duplicated material is that it can be retained by the learners to use as and when they want.

Printing

The so called letter-press printing is the best. The quality of printing is superb and very good quality illustrations are also possible. But the cost of printing, specially when the number of copies to be printed is small, becomes very high. If some illustrations are to be printed in colour, the cost may become prohibitive.

Low-cost reproduction

Low-cost reproduction processes can be used to offset the high cost of letter-press printing. The quality of reproduction can be quite good – even illustrations can be incorporated—but what is more important is that they can be easily reproduced by using simple equipment which is not difficult to operate. The cyclostyling process, with a stencil ‘cut’ on the typewriter, or a stylus is extensively used for this purpose. The quality of reproduction can be quite satisfactory. Where facsimile reproduction is desired, it can be done through xerography. Every university or college now owns a fast automatic xerographing machine, which makes reproduction for non-profit use at virtually no cost. The cost of xerography from the market is also quite low.

Some schools and colleges, or departments that do not have access to either cyclostyling or xerography, can use block printing, silk-screen, vegetable printing, etc., though they require some deft work for good reproduction.

Some simple directions for good quality hand duplication are given below :

* Use uniform and adequate pressure while making the

master sheet.

- * Keep margins on all sides.
- * Use only line-drawings for illustrations. 'Half-tones' do not come out satisfactorily even in xerography. Small illustrations are to be preferred.
- * Plan an effective layout. Poor quality cyclostyled material is mostly ignored.
- * Colour can be introduced by cyclostyling twice, using different inks or through vegetable printing.
- * Use only high-grade ink, which is easily absorbed by the paper and does not smear.
- * The paper for cyclostyling must also be absorbent, so that the printing ink dries up fast.

General Suggestions

The instructor must be aware of the characteristic of each type of teaching aid that will help him to make the best choice for its use in non-formal learning situations. The audio-visual aids—radio, film, filmstrip, slide, video and television—can make a significant contribution to learning if preceded by a meaningful introduction, and followed by a discussion. However, most of these audio-visual aids depend heavily on costly hardware, particularly those which are more suitable to the typical groups of learners. Also the facilities for their use are not always available. For example, uninterrupted electric supply, on which most of the equipment depends may not be available everywhere. So, at least for the present, a more extensive use of other educational aids is recommended for non-formal communication. Graphic aids, three-dimensional models, displays and duplicated materials can be more conveniently used instead. Ready-made educational aids are also commercially available though they may not be quite suitable for individual or local needs. However, if the various audio-visual aids can serve more or less the same purpose, they can be used alternatively to break the monotony resulting from the use of a single educational aid.

Making Audio-visual Aids

There is a dearth of satisfactory audio-visual materials

for non-formal education. But many of the audio-visual materials can be prepared by the instructor himself at low cost. The following suggestions will help the instructor in preparing his or her own audio-visual materials :

- * The teaching aids must be in line with the learners' age, experience and ability to read and write. For a literate group, have printed or cyclostyled material; for an illiterate group, have exhibits and pictures; for rural learners, with limited experience, have actual objects with simple diagrams; while for the more informed, models, mock-ups, and more elaborate illustrations can be used. Children will also benefit from charts presenting a single idea, while charts depicting comparisons can be used for youths and adults.
- * All visual aids should depict local settings and situations to be more appealing and convincing.
- * All such educational aids must be made from locally available materials and should be cheap to make.
- * The materials prepared must be light-weight and easily transportable. Non-formal classes may be held at different places and heavy and cumbersome equipment would be difficult to transport and set up. Projected aids can be difficult to carry and set up without a special van. There are no such problems with other materials.

Avoid making and using such materials which can be damaged in storage or need technical help in operation.

Improvisation

Improvisation in the use of teaching aids and materials can be very helpful for the instructor in non-formal teaching. Non-formal teaching programmes do not have a large budget, and, therefore, whatever materials and resources are available will have to be adapted for the teaching of the non-formal learners. For example, instead of flip-charts and flannel and bulletin-boards for display, simple boards can be propped up on tables put against the walls. No extra easels would then be required for the display of bulletin boards. Charts and

posters can be easily hung with cloth-pins on a string stretched across the room, instead of flip boards. Flannel or an old blanket can be spread vertically on a raised *charpoy* or even a table. Table or desk-tops, instead of expensive showcases can be used for displaying the articles. The bare wall or even a white sheet, can be used as a screen for projected aids.

Most of these instructional materials are meant for group use. But they can be easily adapted for repeat use also, to take care of the late-comers, slow learners or absentees.

Summary

The methods and materials most suited to the non-formal situation are preferred over the rigid, formal methods. A combination of various methods helps break the formality and makes learning easier. Folk media discussions, informal grouping, informal setting arrangements, repetition of key words, take-home materials, all help the non-formal learners to feel at ease, and to learn. Avoid lectures and liberalize use of audio-visual aids, but take care of the deteriorating vision and impaired hearing of some learners.

Low-cost, locally made, even improvised materials could be used as effective teaching aids. Graphic materials, displays, original materials, 3-dimensional models, projected aids, will have to be used according to the age, ability and experience of the learners.

EVALUATION IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Formal education has set objectives, elaborate theories and rigid practical tests, with a stringent system of final examination to evaluate the students for success or failure. But all this is absent in non-formal education (NFE). Not that no evaluation is needed in NFE—evaluation in every system of education is a must—and it is in NFE to justify its status as a system of education and learning. Only it follows different criteria for evaluation, confined not just to judging the performance of the individual student, but also to evaluate what NFE has done for the educational and intellectual awareness of the community. Since there is greater flexibility in NFE regarding attendance, learning experience and curricula, an evaluation of a different sort is needed. It is necessary in NFE, to find out whether the learning and teaching programmes have made any positive impact on the learners and whether the resources have been properly utilized. Evaluation is also needed to find out the shortcomings (if any) so that corrective steps could be taken to improve the programme. Evaluation is also needed to make better plans for the future.

Several official and non-formal agencies associated with NFE have reported failures of their non-formal programmes, mostly because there was no evaluation in their programmes. There was also much wastage of resources which went undetected in the absence of any monitoring. The reason for the motivation of the learners and tardy progress of the programmes can only be found through evaluation. Inbuilt and periodical evaluation can help to find the weaknesses and

deficiencies in planning and implementation, so that corrective steps could be taken in time.

Problems in Evaluation

At present, the NFE system lacks a scientific and critical method of evaluation. There is still no precise and error-free system of evaluating non-formal educational programmes. Absence of uniformity in NFE makes formal evaluation impossible. Conventional tests and examinations will not work with NFE. The dread of examinations will keep many a non-formal learner away. Moreover, when the current trend, even in formal education, is to eliminate final examinations and to adapt a more informal and less rigid method of evaluation, the NFE system will have to devise its own methods for evaluation. The methods will also have to be non-formal. A variety of qualitative and quantitative data still has to be collected and analysed for evaluation of a non-formal programme. Immediate results, like examination results in formal education, cannot be possible. The real gains of NFE may manifest themselves after some time in the form of better social behaviour and improvement in the quality of life of the learners and the community. Regular follow-up programmes may help in evaluation.

Evaluation Methods

Evaluation in NFE can be through : (1) attendance records, (2) cost-effectiveness, (3) use of knowledge and abilities acquired, (4) budget utilization, (5) reaction of the learners, and (6) reaction of the instructors.

Attendance records

Overall attendance of the learners is a significant indication of the keenness of the learners. Attendance can be according to the type of programme. Classification of the programmes can be according to : (1) methods of teaching - talk, demonstration, workshop. (2) instructor—male, female, age, experience and qualification, and (3) topics—literacy, nutrition, vocational skills, etc.

Care has to be taken to see that the attendance records are

correctly maintained and the figures are not inflated for meeting the targets.

Cost-effectiveness

Cost-effectiveness of the project, in terms of input-output ratio can be worked out to evaluate the programme. The expenses involved in setting up the infrastructure, acquiring materials and transportation, may prove to be a measure of the actual benefits of the NFE programme.

Use of knowledge and abilities

Actual use of knowledge and abilities acquired through NFE classes can be observed through home visits and records of the work of the participants. These can be at three levels : (1) personal development, like being able to do one's own work involving reading, writing and simple arithmetic, fluency in conversation, cooking one's own meals or making ones own clothes, (2) competency in doing similar work for the family and neighbours, including reading and writing letters for them, or arranging family and community functions, family-planning camps and campaigns for clean enviroment, and (3) increased employment opportunities for men and women, provided through better education in a non-formal way. Using skills learned through NFE, even self-employment, are all a measure of the success of NFE. For evaluation, all these will need to be actually verified.

Budget utilization

Proper utilization of finances—grants, loans and subsidies, and other facilities provided by the government or other agencies, will also help to evaluate the effectiveness of the NFE plans. The records of the income and the expenditure can be checked to find out if the resources are being properly utilized for the intended purpose and there is no wastage or leakage.

Reaction of the learners

The reaction of the learners can be measured through questionnaires and check-lists which can be administered in

groups or individually, separately for the illiterates and the literates, and the less educated persons (Appendix A). For the educated, the scales with more than two points can be used to show the levels of gains in terms of knowledge, abilities and recreational activities. The reactions can be in terms of delight, relief from boredom, increased desire for knowledge, increased sense of fulfilment, increased self-confidence, elimination of negative attitudes, development or betterment of skills, better personal homes and community practices, and better vocational and occupational opportunities. For large-scale NFE programmes, standardized tests for assessing the literacy levels, amount of knowledge, vocational skills, behaviour and development of positive attitudes and values may be employed.

Reaction of the instructor

The reaction of the instructor can be in the form of a report on his satisfaction regarding impact of the non-formal education on learners. His assessment could also contain :

- * His opinion regarding co-operation, enthusiasm and willingness on the part of the learners to have classes in future also.
- * His difficulties regarding motivation, physical facilities, implementation and evaluation.
- * His suggestions for changes and improvement in the programme.

As a part of evaluation, the non-formal instructor himself can be rated by his supervisors with the help of various rating scales (Appendices—B, C, D).

Role of supervisor

NFE is the work of a team. The instructor alone cannot do everything. The supervisor needs to help and guide the instructor rather than find faults with his work. The supervisor should be sympathetic when the instructor faces genuine problems and difficulties. As the supervisor has more knowledge and experience he must forewarn the instructor about the problems he may face, and continuously guide him

rather than appear on the scene at the last stage to evaluate the instructor. The instructor, on his part, should turn to his supervisor without any hesitation and gracefully accept the suggestions and criticisms of the supervisor.

The inflated reports showing only progress, may do more harm than a realistic appraisal which may include both the positive and negative aspects. The formal learning programmes occasionally take up the follow-up studies of their alumni to find out the usefulness of their curriculum. But in the absence of any formal curriculum, the NFE programmes still need to have regular follow-ups. These indicate the true impact of non-formal educational programmes and help in knowing the extent of retention of learning acquired in non-formal classes, and whether the learners are benefitting thereby.

The poor and lowly are very likely to discontinue their interest in education due to ever-present family and personal problems, but they need to be helped to see beyond the present. The follow-up programme will help the instructor to maintain contact with them, and thus, motivating them to attend the classes and make the best use of their education. This may also give some clues about the reasons for its success or failure.

Regular records of the NFE evaluation, and publicising the outstanding innovative programmes will serve as models for NFE programmes. Evaluation of longitudinal and cumulative aspects of NFE should be carried out. Many NFE programmes are short term and just *ad hoc*. Their separate impact may not be impressive, and at times, may not register at all. Nevertheless, their combined impact may change the quality of life to a great extent, specially of the weaker sections.

Summary

The most difficult aspect of the non-formal education is its correct evaluation, as evaluation refers to a formal component. Periodical tests, final theory and practical examinations are absent in non-formal education. New, innovative evaluation methods pointing to the actual gain in knowledge, change in

opinions and practices, enjoyment of leisure and increased job, or self-employment opportunities, need to be created. Attendance, cost, reports of the learners and the instructors, observation of actual practices, records of use of learning, regular follow-ups—all will help in the evaluation of the non-formal education programmes.

WHEN CAN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FAIL ?

The non-formal education (NFE) is entirely rooted in the needs of the people, as felt by them. NFE can fail at any stage if people change their needs or even shift their priorities and the NFE fails to take notice of their changing needs. The basic needs of the people are food, shelter and clothing—it does not include education. Only when these basic needs are met, other behavioural needs social and psychological—can be considered by an individual. For the poor and the illiterates who are still struggling to meet their basic needs, other needs are secondary. From the point of view of the learners, lack of feeling other needs (apart from the basic needs) and not regarding them as significant in any way, will be the biggest contributing factor for the failure of NFE.

Looking from the point of view of the organizers, NFE can also fail due to several organizational lacunae and other limitations. Because the organizers have not been able to recognize the learners' needs, they could not have planned a non-formal programme responsive to the learners. There can also be a faulty planning, improper utilization of resources, including human resources, behind the failure.

Another contributory factor for the failure of NFE can be found with the sponsoring agencies, or the community, or the political set-up. One or all of them may have vested interests which can be detrimental to NFE programmes. In fact, in India, schemes like the National Adult Education Programme, literacy campaigns, community development programmes and many such schemes have not been able to make the hoped-for

impact, mostly because vested interests and lack of drive have taken precedence over national objectives.

Each of these factors, which could be responsible for the failure of NFE, will be discussed in detail.

The Non-formal Learners

The non-formal learners bring their individual problems to the NFE class. Although NFE seeks to improve the quality of life of the learners, there are many problems which are beyond its scope. Both young and adult learners often face conditions which compel them to drop out of the non-formal stream of education.

Job pattern and education

The work, or the job pattern of the learners may not coincide with their education. If there is a clash, obviously the job comes first and education is dropped. Even if the time of the non-formal class is changed, the working non-formal learners may return from work too tired and exhausted to attend non-formal classes. The need to retain a job influences the motivation of learners in a negative way. The enthusiasm of the co-workers or their complacency also influences the non-formal learners. Sometimes an increment or a short-term benefit may divert the attention of the non-formal learners from education. For instance, overtime allowance, a supplementary or a substitute job can discourage the learner from attending his classes. The poor, the not-so-poor, and at times even the well-to-do, may find the attraction of monetary gain too tempting to resist. Since all the non-formal learners are employed, their employment issues are the most common factors in determining their availing of NFE.

Family problems

In some cases, the learners and their families are victims of such socio-economic deprivation that they cannot even perceive the need for NFE. Even when the organizers try to reach them, they find ways to escape. The sheer ignorance of the deprived, makes them impervious to the benefits of any form of education. Their stark poverty kills all thoughts of

improving the quality of life through education. Such learners, even when they join NFE, under pressure, soon drop out, and thus contribute to the failure of NFE.

Migration of the learners

Learners, mostly of lower socio-economic status migrate in search of jobs or are less stable in their occupation. Their working hours change, their residence changes, in fact, their life gets so disrupted that they do not have any time for non-formal education. They need to put in more time in learning, which again is in conflict with their shifting life. The easiest way for them is to drop out of the non-formal stream, or just to keep away

Under-estimation of non-formal education

Poverty and ignorance are at the root of many family quarrels, neighbourhood fights, absenteeism on jobs, corresponding to their low income, which give rise to apathy and fatalism. All these factors together make learners from poverty-stricken homes underestimate non-formal education. The NFE is expected to benefit specially the weaker sections, but ironically, the weaker sections in India are the least concerned with education. When such learners drop out or keep away, the NFE obviously cannot succeed.

Economic needs

The non-formal learners are more vulnerable to criticism and failure. Although the organizers and the instructors do not point out the lack of progress in the learners, the learners themselves, are quick to perceive their shortcomings, and 'solve' them by simply dropping out of the programme. Many adult learners are in need of developing employable or saleable skills as fast as they can. They do not view literacy, and general self-development programmes as necessary or useful for them. Such programmes, in fact, are considered to be useless and a waste of time. Hence, the economic needs should be met first. The programmes may fail if they do not cater to raising the incomes of the learners.

State of health

The poor, who form the majority of non-formal learners, suffer most from illnesses and ailments, including the evil of too many children, which affects the health of the mother and also the care of her children. Among the poor families, anaemia, enteric diseases, chest and lung infections, due mostly to their poor nutritional status, are quite common and they fall sick often. Poor housing, unhygienic toilet facilities, unsafe drinking water, and an unhealthy environment, make it still worse. The learners from slums and overcrowded tenements always seem to be famished and ill-fed as if they are born and bred not to possess physical stamina, or motivation to sustain themselves through a meaningful training for work. It is the impracticality of even the slightest advancement in the non-formal programme that keeps these learners away.

Women and girls

As for NFE for girls and women, the vested interests of their menfolk is the principal factor working for its failure. It may appear that ignorance and superstition of women inhibit them from taking up NFE, but truly speaking, it is due to the reactionary and selfish attitudes of men in general. Men, by and large, do not approve of women going out to attend classes to educate themselves, because housekeeping and child-rearing will be neglected or will have to be shared. Men's authority and superiority over women are attributable to their income-earning powers and role. Most men would be willing to go without the women's share of earnings as they fear it may cause an objectionable change in the status of women. Indian women are simply "brain-washed" not to go out of their homes to do any work. These women must still drudge at home. The NFE, thus, is always in danger of failing because it does not have the support of the men as far as women's education is concerned. Will any impoverished woman keep away from NFE aimed at generating income if her husband, or other male relations encourage her by offering to share the household chores? The answer would be a definite 'NO'. The male relations of the woman non-formal

learners are instrumental in trying to make a failure of NFE, specially of NFE for women.

Role of instructors in the failure of NFE

Can a non-formal instructor be the cause of the failure of the non-formal educational programme? Are there special facilities to operate non-formal programmes? There is no categorical answer to these questions. Every non-formal educational programme is planned with a set of objectives for a group of learners who differ from others. And because of such differences, the teacher of the non-formal stream of education has the responsibility of evolving each non-formal programmes suited to the learners' exclusive needs. It is the unitary and exclusive organizing of non-formal programmes which can cause the teacher to commit errors. While many errors may be unintentional, unforeseen and unavoidable, many are not.

Lack of orientation

The term 'orientation' is used deliberately against 'preparation'. India requires such a vast network of NFE that long, professional training of teachers may not be feasible. An *orientation*, which means an awareness of ways and means of NFE, its magnitude and significance, can be given to each non-formal instructor. If orientation to non-formal education is not given to the teacher, he or she is most likely to remain less resourceful, less imaginative and less helpful. The failure of the programmes, then, could be due to the instructor's lack of instructional and psychological skills. The instructor may not be able to teach and guide or to sustain the interest of the non-formal learners.

Loss of confidence in learners

Because of the general inferior status accorded to NFE in the present educational set-up, the non-formal learners are also viewed with disdain. The teacher's perception of the learners can have a positive influence on the learners; but some teachers find it hard to convince themselves of the fruitfulness

of the progress and the ability of the learners. Such a negative attitude will contribute to the failure or at least to a lesser degree of success of the programme. The teachers' confidence in their learners will create zeal and motivation to learn, in the students.

Incompetent instructors

An un-trained instructor can still improve through orientation; but if the instructor happens to be basically incompetent, nothing much can be expected of him or her. Just as NFE is considered inferior to formal education, a less competent teacher is likely to be assigned to non-formal teaching, much to its detriment.

An incompetent non-formal instructor has two characteristics : (1) The instructor does not have adequate knowledge of the subject or the problems, and works superficially. The contents of teaching are just shallow, and remain only in notes or textbooks, without being made known to the learners. He or she fills the classes and even laboratory work and field trips with trivialities, and blindly follows 'bookish' knowledge without being able to apply or transfer it to the students. The information may be obsolete and irrelevant to non-formal teaching; (2) The second characteristic is that the incompetent teacher cannot motivate the students to a reasonable level. The teaching style and the personality of the instructor fail to sustain the interest of the learners. Good quality of teaching is clearly reflected in the sympathetic personality and pleasant manners of the teacher in dealing with the learners. Teachers who cannot motivate the students, and also lack adequate knowledge, can only contribute to the failure of NFE.

There is another type of teachers who do not care to be competent in the sense of acquiring knowledge of the subject and the motivational approaches. They only work to please the students by being extra lenient, even helping the students with out-of-class work. Such teachers are considered smart, sympathetic, 'pragmatic' and resourceful. Such qualities, no doubt, are needed in a teacher but their lack of real knowledge which cannot truly enlighten a learner, nor motivate him,

cannot be ignored. Surely, such 'success' is illusory and not real.

Flaws in Approach

The instructor may be tempted to employ the teaching strategies of formal education which assume a captive audience and an authoritarian atmosphere in the class. The non-formal stream of education has only voluntary learners, who may even be adults and quite senior in age, who expect a more permissive and less stifling atmosphere in a non-formal class. The learning activities, therefore, need to be more self-directed and result-oriented, rather than rigidly programmed. The non-formal programme is not meant to be a 'drill' or a routine practice. The non-formal learner has to learn with a minimum expenditure of time, energy and money, as non-formal learning is probably being done along with a job or full-time house-keeping, in the case of female learners. If the instructor has not selected topics to suit the ability, time and temperament of the learners, the programme can fail.

It is possible that the objectives of NFE, are relevant, but the methods of instruction or learning activities may not be. The earnest non-formal learners would want to do things by themselves in order to learn. They involve themselves in learning by doing rather than only being observers or passive imitators. An exception could be made for those learners who have come at the persuasion of others, and are not personally keen to learn, or when the learning activity is not what they seek. In such cases, the non-formal learners may not become active participants in the non-formal programme of a particular type.

Experience at PRAGATI

At PRAGATI, the NFE Centre, in the Education and Extension Department of the Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University, Baroda, many non-formal learners keenly observe the demonstrations but few participate or actually make items in the workshop. One obvious factor is, of course, the popularity of food preparation among the female learners. When food preparations are demonstrated, the attendance

is at its highest. The workshops, which give training in making decorative articles are not regarded as particularly essential, and are thinly attended.

Absenteeism and Programme Changes

Absenteeism in instructors can be a major cause of the failure of the non-formal programme. An irregular teacher can inhibit, or at least, dilute the desire for learning. Absenteeism raises doubts about the seriousness of the instructors, and the learners come to regard NFE classes as a waste of time.

It is inadvisable to change non-formal programmes often—this usually reflects poor planning. Though absolute rigidity in planning is not always desirable, nor always possible, a non-formal programme which is frequently changed is proof of poor planning and is detrimental to NFE. The non-formal learners cannot be expected to be attracted by frequent changes in time, place, requirements, fee, contents, or instructors. The learners, as also the instructors, must have a feeling that the programme will proceed smoothly, and they would be able to complete the programme as planned. Too many changes and alterations will disturb the continuity of the programme, which can only lead to the failure of NFE.

Role of Sponsoring Agencies

Why is a non-formal programme necessary? This is a question which is to be satisfactorily answered before starting the programmes. The organizers, the funding agencies and the learners, are all equally vital links in the organization of NFE programmes. All three parties must have valid reasons for starting a programme. Also, there should be a consensus on the purpose, the methods and the monitoring of such programmes before they are taken up in hand. Lack of clarity of purpose will lead to later confusion and disagreements. The decision about who will do what and why is also to be made in advance. The community of learners have also to be surveyed to determine to what extent they would avail of the non-formal programme, what should be

done to reach them and what are their requirements which the NFE should strive to meet.

Organizing institutions

For the organizers, the funding agencies, and the institutions, the purpose in organizing NFE programmes may be to emulate others without a thought of the actual utility of the programme. If one university, or State, has a non-formal stream the other also wants to follow the example without caring for its justification. One public foundation, or an institution, may wish to offer financial aid for NFE because it has the funds, but resources are to be employed only when the people's motivation for learning is, or can be, aroused and not merely because the money is available. Expecting people to flock to a cinema house being built, can be a correct presumption, but building a school for non-formal learning at any place and expecting it to be filled by non-formal learners cannot be taken for granted. There can be many exceptions, but it has been observed that the very people whom we believe to be educationally deprived, do not always perceive their deprivation. Many media meant for their education turn out to be media of recreation instead.

Education and recreation

The purpose of NFE needs to be perceived by the instructors, the funding agencies, and the beneficiaries. The media of communication radio, TV, drama, and even demonstrations—have been taken as recreation rather than as education. This fact has to be recognized by organizers and educationists before taking up a programme. The NFE is meant to educate and not to entertain.

The clarity of purpose can be ensured by periodic evaluation. At the start, a fee or a bond, or an agreement, or even some voluntary work from the non-formal learners can assure genuine interest in education.

Complacency

Complacency seems to have become the main drawback in many areas of education in India. Complacency and

indifference are present not only in instructors and learners, they are there in the administrative and ministerial staff too. Even in universities and colleges, the plans and schedules for academic activities seem to be lagging behind. The non-formal stream of education is not untouched. Either the programmes do not start as planned or there are setbacks soon after. Sometimes, the resources and the facilities are not available on time or if all else is ready, the instructors may be absent. It is very sad to find the learners waiting for the instructor who does not turn up. If the instructors are indifferent and do not take their work seriously, the non-formal programme is bound to fail.

There are instances of programmes well started and thriving but gradually the organizers give up all control, and let the programme decay and die. When the organizers and the people at the helm become indifferent, complacent and disinterested, their subordinates will also follow suit. A conscientious monitoring of the non-formal programme can save it from collapse. Some even take it for granted that institutions are bound to decay, but periodical assessment of the progress of the programme will keep the institution of NFE alive and flourishing.

Corruption

Corruption, in the form of misuse of resources set aside for NFE, can also be the cause of failure of the non-formal system. Corruption mostly starts from the higher levels in the hierarchy of the organizing and teaching personnel. If there is no corruption at the higher level and is found only at the lower levels, it can still be effectively controlled or even removed. But if those at the top are corrupt and dishonest, those at the lower levels are sure to emulate them and the higher-ups will not be able to do anything about it.

The organizers use corrupt practices in selecting teachers and learners, in purchasing materials, in construction of buildings and in many other ways. The misuse of funds is the most common form of corruption and more difficult to detect than embezzlement. There are dishonest practices, shady procedures, 'cooked' reports, and the like, where money

is not directly embezzled, but just manipulated.

It does not take much time for an educational institution to collapse, or to lose its fame and prestige when corruption flourishes unchecked. Some even argue that when corruption is so widespread, how can NFE escape from it? This argument is absolutely untenable and must be firmly rejected.

Summary

There are three broad factors for the failure or lack of success in non-formal education : (1) the non-formal learners themselves, (2) the indifferent teachers, and (3) corruption in the organizing agencies.

The learners' imaginary or assumed interests, their neglected economic needs, migration of learners and the men's negative attitude to women's non-formal education, can cause failure of a non-formal programme. The learners drop out when they find that the programme has remained static while they change and find themselves misfits.

The teachers who lack orientation to the philosophy of non-formal education or are indifferent to it, and incompetent, can bring about the failure of the programme. Some teachers have a gross underestimation of the non-formal learners, and they take up teaching without confidence in the learners' capabilities. Such teachers also select irrelevant, dull and uninspiring learning activities, and thus drive away the learners. Some teachers also lack the basic discipline and integrity and are irregular in their work. They do not have any interest in motivating the non-formal learners, who drop out. The learners find the programme useless because the teachers select contents which are not needed.

The corruption, apathy and lack of clarity on the part of the sponsoring or organizing agencies are amongst the biggest factors which are responsible for the failure of non-formal programmes. Misuse of resources, and favouritism in appointments, neglect in monitoring progress, are bound to bring failure. Institutional decay due to corruption and administrative malpractices should be checked through

constant, or at least, periodical assessment of all aspects of non-formal education.

Exercises

1. Interview the teachers of non-formal education to find out if there are drop-outs in their programmes, and why it is so.
2. Study some recent articles or papers on drop-outs in non-formal education.
3. Find out, through a sample survey of the non-formal learners, about their gains through non-formal education.
4. Find out the problems of the non-formal learners by interviewing them.

RESEARCH IN NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Research in non-formal education (NFE) has three aspects : (1) to find out new and better ways to reach people who received no education under the formal system, and who, but for the NFE would have remained condemned to life-long ignorance, (2) to collect more and newer contents to educate people through non-formal ways, and (3) to critically evaluate the NFE itself to determine the extent of its success and weakness at any stage of its working, and how it can be improved. In academic language, the methods and the aids of instruction, the contents of the curricula and the evaluation of the non-formal programmes, are the broad areas of research in NFE.

Research is the problem-solving approach to learning. Research means an investigation into reasons, associations and effects, and other factors which provide the answers to the problems faced by NFE. Research is needed to find out how to make NFE more relevant in the face of changing conditions in the country and to meet the herculean task of removing ignorance. The recognition of NFE as a system for the education of the masses who have been ignored by the formal stream, is itself the outcome of research. Through research, it has also been possible to improve the quality of NFE and to extend its horizon. However, something more is needed and that can only be found out through research.

Some specific needs for research in NFE are described as follows :

Verification of assumptions

Many practices in NFE, like practices in other fields, are

based on assumptions that they must be correct. The devout bathe in some rivers at a specified hour under the assumption that all their sins would, thus be washed away. This is, however, not scientifically correct, particularly when most of our sacred rivers have been polluted for years. But many beliefs are still strongly held just because the forefathers had also believed so, though they are not always correct. Women enjoy sewing and cooking, and yet most tailors and cooks are men. Formal education is assumed to be linked with jobs, and yet there are large numbers of educated unemployed. There are many other examples to show that several practices and values are based on wrong assumptions, and not on facts. But through research we can find out the actualities and correct the wrong assumptions which are, very often, harmful.

The research findings about the attitudes of the poor illiterates to family-planning reveal that they believe that children are the gift of God and any control over their birth is a great sin. Therefore, the efforts of the non-formal educators should be to tell these ignorant people that too many children, and too frequent pregnancies, are not only a hazard to the health of the mother, but it is equally difficult to rear and care for too many children. Children do bring happiness to the family but only when there are just one or two who can be properly cared for and looked after.

Research has also shown that though the people want to improve the quality of life and even know that education is a way to do it, they cannot go through 12 to 15 years of formal education for that. If NFE, of a shorter duration, can help to improve the quality of life by assuring more income through training for jobs, it is very welcome to the poor and the needy. The beneficial results of NFE manifest themselves in a much shorter time which makes it all the more attractive for the deprived.

Improvement of Contents and Methods

Research is a tool for evaluation. Evaluation is required to check the programmes periodically and to rectify the shortcoming when found. The flow of new information has kept the contents and methods of NFE constantly changing.

Many girls who once chose to become typists, now wish to learn computer operation as these are being increasingly used in offices. The NFE must also shift from typing to courses in computer operation. Hotel management, catering and food technology are other new areas with many career opportunities which did not exist before, and which offer good pay for the trained. These have now been added to the changing contents of the NFE. Research discovers for us ideas, principles and practices of the new contents, as needed by the non-formal learners for their betterment, that can be taught through NFE. The learners will also be able to decide what to learn and how it can be learnt. Research on non-formal learners can be directed to many aspects : What do they need to learn ? How can they learn without long years of studying ? How can they learn more in less time ? And how can they use their learning to improve the quality of life, and to earn more ?

Data Collection Tools

There are different ways of conducting research in NFE. These differing ways of collecting evidence for verification of selected assumptions and hypotheses are the differentiating characteristics of each research design. In most researches, the evidences, called the *data* (singular : *datum*) are collected, for which different techniques are used, and later analyzed.

Observation

The observation of non-formal learners is a common method of conducting research in NFE. It is done under selected conditions for a given time, at a given place, while using observation as a tool. A set of questions or items may be prepared as the basis for observing the learners. The researcher may herself become a non-formal learner while learning in a non-formal situation, and may collect data. Such a method is called *participatory observation*. The advantage of participatory observation is that the researcher can collect the factual evidence as observed by herself. She can confirm the data herself if they are collected by other researchers. Matters other than the pre-chosen ones, can also be observed as behaviour does not occur in isolation but in association

with previous behaviour. The limitation is that participatory observation is more time-consuming than non-participatory observation.

Interview

When learners or their teachers or administrators can be personally interviewed, the evidences of their problems, practices, and values can be directly collected. The researcher comes face to face with the respondents for the collection of data. In the interview technique, the appropriate place and time are necessary, both for the interviewer and the persons interviewed. A good rapport, sincerity and privacy are to be ensured by the interviewer before, during and, sometimes, even after the interview.

If managerial problems, learners' attitudes, and other psychological matters are to be diagnosed, the interview can be the ideal way to collect data. The researcher must learn to conduct an interview, and rehearse it well before conducting the actual interview. A trained and alert interviewer can collect additional information by just observing the person being interviewed, while asking the questions. The main limitations of the interview technique are the long time taken in the interviews, the difficulty of maintaining uniformity in questions and the manner of asking them. These limitations can be overcome, to a considerable extent, by a competent interviewer. An interview has the advantage of direct observation of the respondent, which helps in confirming the validity of data.

Response-Return

While the observation and interview are conducted by the researcher, the Response-Return is done by the respondent. The Response-Return is the use of a questionnaire, check-list, test paper or any other data collection sheet, which is to be filled out by the respondent himself. When data are to be collected from a large sample, Response-Return is the most convenient method.

The common errors in Response-Return are that it may have irrelevant items, or too many items, and the ways of

recording the responses may not be appropriate. It may also be sent to wrong persons—those who do not possess research consciousness and those who may not have the data. In most formal researches, the responses are returned by less than 50 percent of the chosen respondents. Such researches can give inconsequential and inconclusive data, as well as their incorrect interpretations.

Because the Response-Return can be distributed to many at the same time, the data can be collected in a shorter time as compared to interviews and observations. But the responses can be unreliable when filled out under unsupervised situations. Mailed Response>Returns and those distributed individually should be accompanied with a written request in the form of a courteous letter.

A good Response-Return can be formulated only after studying the respondents, and the content which is to be investigated. The knowledge of research methodology, as well as the problems or phenomena to be studied, are necessary for relevant data collection. The language of the questionnaire must be simple but direct and easily understood by the respondents, otherwise there can be every possibility of irrelevant data being collected.

Design of Research

Three designs have been widely used for research in NFE. They are : (1) survey, (2) correlational research, and (3) action research. In fact 'survey' is a blanket term in research designs and has many variations.

Survey

A survey can be any investigation where the present conditions are described in some depth or detail, using any number of respondents. The non-formal learners can be described by finding out their age, SES, interests, attitudes, and any other factor. A survey can be conducted of just a segment of the population. In a descriptive survey, no hypothesis need be used. The non-formal programmes can be described by a survey design. In such a survey, the type, duration and expenses of the programme can be explained.

The learners' views on what they learnt through NFE can be found out. The data can be collected through any one of the techniques—observation, interview, or Response-Return.

Correlation

It has been observed in social sciences that several variables are associated with each other. This is also shown in our behavior. When one factor is thought to be occurring or operating only when some other factor is present, it is called correlation between these two factors. The correlation can be a strong or weak, significant or non-significant association between two or more variables. The non-formal learners may show a correlation between their age and leisure time. An unemployed youth may have more leisure, but an adult unemployed may have less leisure because he or she may have house-keeping responsibilities also. When two or more variables increase or decrease in the same direction, it is called a *positive correlation*. For example, the weight of a person will increase with age up to a certain limit; higher education will mean higher acceptance of a small family norm.

Negative correlation

A negative correlation between two variables means, one variable increases (or decreases) whereas, the other operates in just the opposite direction. For example, as the age of a non-formal learner increases, the desire to learn may decrease; if a person puts on weight, he is likely to walk slowly. Here the variables explain the correlations between age and learning, and weight and walking.

By establishing correlations, we can understand, or determine, which variable to increase or decrease, for better results. In the use of designs for research in non-formal education, some knowledge about statistics is necessary. Simple statistical methods like tests of associations, measures of central tendencies, and analyses of variance, are used in research in non-formal education.

Action research

Action research is one in which the ongoing, or current

problems can be studied with a definite application of its inferences. For instance, a teacher wants to find out why many non-formal learners remain absent on one particular day or time or place. If the reason is a clashing timetable, it is to be changed; if there is a less effective teacher on the particular day, she has to increase her effectiveness, or she has to be substituted.

Action research is directed at solving immediate problems. It has limitations of the teachers' and learners' bias, and shortage of time. Only small, simple and immediate problems can be analyzed and solved through action research. Sometimes, action research is done too superficially to yield any useful information, but if a competent teacher undertakes an action research, she can significantly contribute to the improvement of non-formal programmes. Action research, thus, aims at enabling one to take an action promptly in order to bring about an improvement. Action research also has the advantage of simplicity and no complex statistical and compiling procedures are used.

Interpretations of Research Findings

The last, but the most important part of research is to interpret the findings. The numerical or quantitative findings are tabulated on the basis of raw data collected from the respondents. These findings may be quantified in forms of frequencies (numbers), percentages, means, medians, modes, t-test values, chi-squares, F-test values, r scores meaning correlations, and several others. The mistake a researcher can make is to forget to explain their meaning. Interpretation of findings means to explain what the quantitative findings mean in the real and the existing situation. If an over-weight person shows a marked slow movement in walking, his weight may need to be reduced. Ways of reducing weight can also be pointed out if the reasons for being overweight are studied. This is an interpretation.

When researchers leave out interpretations of their findings, the basic purpose of research is not achieved. All the major findings should be interpreted so that their implications can be known. Quite often the researchers are not the executives

or those in charge of improving the non-formal programmes. But when the researchers are also the executors and planners, they cannot afford to ignore the need of stating, very clearly, the implications of the findings.

In NFE, research can serve the purpose described at the beginning of this chapter. As non-formal learning needs to be always congruent with the current needs, problems of the learners, the researcher has to be very precise, direct and purposeful in his findings, and fast in his work.

Suggested Research Areas

Although NFE will benefit by good research in any area, some specific areas are suggested for the information of those interested in improving NFE through original work :

- * Profiles of non-formal learners, studies about learners' values, expectations, interests, problems, attitudes, adjustments and adaptations; studies about learners' knowledge, retention of knowledge, learning ability, speed, transfer of training, studies of learners' SES, sex, age distribution, size of the family and structure.
- * Methods and media for non-formal education; investigations about the effectiveness of teaching methods, audio-visual aids, construction of such aids, use of mixed media in large or small groups of learners.
- * Administration and management of non-formal education : study of financial requirement, actual and projected expenses, reasons for major budgetary requirements, research in physical facilities like space, equipment and furniture, studies of personnel—their training, supervision, assessment, promotion, work distributions; investigations about placement of learners, retraining needs, liaison between the non-formal stream and the employing agencies.
- * Evaluation of the non-formal programmes : Studies about evaluation of learning, evaluative techniques, evaluation of teachers' effectiveness, their commitments and problems; studies about evaluation of communities—their gains, opinions and co-operation.

Abstract of a Research on two Methods of Non-Formal Education

At the Education and Extension Department of the **Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University, Baroda**, a non-formal education centre called PRAGATI has been operating for three years. The Centre is both a laboratory for the students, and a service agency for the local communities. In 1985, Shukla conducted a research study under the guidance of Dr. A. Chandra, to determine the effectiveness of workshops and demonstrations as methods of communication in non-formal education. It was found that both the methods were well used. A brief report is given here.

Objectives of the study

There were three main objectives of the study : (1) to study the effectiveness of demonstrations and workshops used at PRAGATI, (2) to study the acceptance of adult educators by 'women learners in relation to learners' age, education, family income, and motivation, and (3) to study the willingness and the contentment of women learners at PRAGATI.

For measuring the effectiveness of demonstrations and workshops, a questionnaire was prepared. There were 13 items to measure effectiveness. The acceptance of adult educators by women learners was measured by eight separate questions, while willingness and contentment were measured by the other seven items. The attendance of women learners at PRAGATI varied from 6 to 37 during the year 1984-85. Percentages and chi-squares were used for the analysis of data.

The major findings were as under :

- * A majority of women learners were well educated and belonged to middle-and high-income groups. They were motivated by different members of their family, as well as by themselves, to learn in a non-formal way at PRAGATI.
- * All the demonstrations were found to be more effective than workshops. A majority of women completely agreed with the effectiveness of the demonstrations at PRAGATI.

- * The seating arrangement, which varied for demonstrations and workshops, was also found satisfactory by all women.
- * The pronunciations of the learners, as also the language was found to be simple and easy to follow and understand. The educators also showed personal interest in women learners during the workshops and spoke in a loud and clear voice.
- * The demonstrations and workshops reflected good preparation and time-management, making them effective. However, these were not sufficient to develop marketable skills in women learners.

Thus the women learners accepted the adult educators and showed contentment and willingness to learn again at PRAGATI. The variables of the two methods showed the same acceptance, or willingness and contentment.

Conclusion

In conclusion, PRAGATI proved quite effective in catering to urban women who belonged to similar socio-economic strata. These women learnt well through demonstrations and workshops. Three reasons can be responsible for this : (1) the educators are trained in NFE methods, (2) women learners tend to be sympathetic to adult educators who were the formal students, and (3) the questionnaire that was used was oversimplified, rather short and cursory. However, as a first research in NFE, the results were very encouraging, and such research studies need to be repeated periodically.

Summary

Research in non-formal education is conducted to find better and new ways of teaching in a non-formal setting, to generate new contents to be taught and to evaluate the entire operation of the non-formal venture. Research also helps to recognize the correct and incorrect assumptions behind our behaviour.

The major types of data collection tools in non-formal research are observation, interview, and Response-Return.

All are useful and can be employed according to their suitability to the research objectives, convenience and economy in use. The three research designs suggested are survey, action and correlation. Each can be used independently and with only a minimum knowledge of statistics.

Interpreting the quantitative findings of all research is very essential. Interpreting the implications of findings is especially necessary in NFE because it is of short duration and, therefore, the improvements have to be introduced promptly. The suggested areas of research are the non-formal learners themselves, methods and media, administration management, and evaluation of NFE.

Exercises

1. Conduct a survey of age, sex and SES of non-formal learners of your college or any nearby agency
2. Use the interview technique to collect data on expenses incurred by non-formal learners—at least 20 interviews.
3. Conduct an action research to invite suggestions of teachers, and non-formal learners for any problem or difficulty they may be facing.

MODELS AND PROGRAMMES IN SOME WESTERN COUNTRIES AND THEIR RELEVANCE FOR INDIA

The directorates of non-formal adult education, continuing education and extension education departments of many Indian universities and autonomous and voluntary agencies, conduct both literacy and non-formal education (NFE) programmes in India. There are many foreign countries also, even the advanced ones, who have NFE programmes for their people, in their countries. A better understanding of the potentialities of NFE, and how it can be best organized and co-ordinated for making a greater impact towards educational development in India can be possible through the study of non-formal programmes of some foreign countries where NFE has made a significant impact on the educational scene and has played the most significant role in the removal of illiteracy and in the development of the high quality of life among the people.

With necessary modifications, these models can be adapted for our country also. Many avoidable errors, and needless experimentations can thus be eliminated, and NFE can be made much more effective. The work of the Danish Folk High Schools, where NFE has been applied with such spectacular effect, is specially significant for India.

Danish Folk High Schools

Nicolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1832), a Danish educationist, who was also a poet, preacher, statesman, historian, and writer, was the philosopher-founder of the Danish schools. It is because of him that Denmark has

virtually eradicated illiteracy. His philosophy stressed both the head (intellect) and the heart of a learner. Influenced by Pestalozzi, another great educationist, Grundtvig believed in education for the masses and a system of education with no examinations, which only promote repeating the words of others.

Grundtvig advocated :

- * Voluntary education.
- * Understanding through gradual experience.
- * Education through the mother tongue.
- * Schools for the education of adults.
- * Schools that will help an ordinary person to find meaning in life, to realize his responsibilities, and to maintain himself throughout his day-to-day life.
- * Education relevant to the learner's needs, interests, and environment.

Education for the common man was the corner-stone of his philosophy. His ideas on the developmental tasks were as follows :

- * *Childhood* (up to 13 or 14 years) : Age of Imagination—Education comprising 3 R's through stories, with total absence of cramming.
- * *Adolescence* (14 to 18 years) : Age of Activity—Apprenticeship at homes, or on farms. Education through story-telling, pedagogic way of instruction and productive and active work. Active member of society, rather than an anti-social person.
- * *Youth* (18 to 25 years) : Age of Inspiration—Education through community singing, physical exercise, talks on history, religion and literature.
- * *Manhood or Womanhood* (above 25 years) : Age of Deeds—Education through the normal activities of life.

Grundtvig's major aim in starting these folk schools was to help the young people to fulfil their daily life needs and to

be able to appreciate the country's culture, history, and literature. He placed emphasis on the development of a sense of values, the ability to differentiate between good and bad and a passionate desire to do things. There is no elevation of the teachers from the students in these folk schools, as mutual sharing is stressed. The schools have no entrance tests and no final examination and there is no fixed syllabus either. These schools also have no formal evaluation. Curiosity and the desire to learn are considered to be the motivating factors and are allowed to develop in a free atmosphere. Housed in community halls, the schools stress physical labour and development of practical abilities rather than bookish education and machine culture.

Non-classroom Approach

Education is imparted through the non-classroom approach. Communication through the spoken word is given importance. Since the Danish Folk Schools believed in the development of the nation through the development of the people, they help the people to—

- think
- co-operate
- develop intelligence
- develop idealism.

Folk High Schools in the Netherlands

The philosophies of the three European educationists, Nikolai Grundtvig, the Danish philosopher, Christen Kold, also a Dane, and the German, Eugen Hosenstock, have been applied in the establishment of the Netherlands Folk High Schools—the Volks Hoge Schules (VHS). Run on non-formal lines, the VHS are mainly for the common people who cannot afford to study in regular, formal schools—these are the rural groups, unemployed persons, retired people and women. The VHS have flexibility to suit the convenience of the learners, and the courses are of short duration—one to two weeks. These schools, being residential, are located in quiet, rural surroundings, and close interaction is provided to develop

co-operation within the society. Fellow-feellings through acceptance of a cross-section of social classes and religions and excursions to the celebrated places in the region form a part of the school programme. Discussions on personal, regional and national problems are encouraged to stimulate community awareness. Helping with the daily household work of the schools also contributes towards removal of ideological and class differences.

The teachers are the course leaders who also call upon outside resources for expert help. Active participation of the learners in the various courses forms a part of the educational system. These courses are problem-oriented, and the potential of the learners is brought out through living and working together.

Categories of Courses

There are three categories of courses :

- * Courses with individual participation for intra and inter-personal development. There is orientation to human problems, such as family life, home, parent-teacher relations and work situations. Persons attending these classes are given study leave with pay.
- * Courses with group participation for intra and inter-group development.

These courses, of one week duration, are offered infrequently, for groups who may be interested in the programmes. Member of an association, teachers from a school, groups formed on the basis of some common interest or belonging to the same socio-economic status join, these courses. They can learn music, painting, gardening, languages, etc., on the basis of their common problems like poverty and illiteracy or unemployment. The major objectives of offering these recurrent courses are meant to help the groups to—

- * Reflect on their particular situation.
- * Think over the desired changes and innovations.
- * Acquire new knowledge and skills.
- * Find ways to implement their ideals.

- * Courses having long-term projects for change or innovation of a social system for inter-group, intraorganizational and intra-community development. These courses are offered for a particular client-system in the residential setting with the application of specific techniques related to the problem to bring about attitudinal changes or to develop social skills. The main slogan of these VHS of the Netherlands is 'To help communities to help themselves'.

The folk schools of Denmark and the Netherlands have a great relevance to non-formal education in India.

Situation in India

India is a large country, with a majority of its immense population living in rural areas. But like Denmark and the Netherlands, it is also a democratic country. Grundtvig's ideas, through these folk schools, gave rise to the democratic ideals of Denmark - the ideals which India also cherishes. The ideals of Denmark are enlightenment, education for citizenship, freedom of thought and humanism; while the Indian ideals are national integration, faith in a better life through planning, education and jobs for all, freedom of beliefs and spiritual values. The situation in India is complicated by the immensity of the population, and the two evils—poverty and illiteracy—to which it has given rise. The poor living conditions, specially in the villages, demand an alternative source of income for the growing number of the educated unemployed. They also need to be vocationally trained to become productive and useful citizens. Vocational training is needed in our country to utilize local raw materials and talents for producing saleable goods to earn more income.

Like Denmark and the Netherlands, India needs more 'folk schools' which foster democratic thinking and a pride in our own culture, language and heritage, apart from developing new skills and work-ethics. Autonomous schools with proper budgets, for supporting adult and vocational education are needed for the entire country to develop national integration and faith in a better tomorrow.

Some versions of these Danish and Dutch folk schools exist in Karnataka, Gujarat and Rajsthan—*lok shalas*, *vidyapeeths*, and *janta* colleges, but folk schools on the European model may not be possible on a nation-wide scale in India. Though the zamindari system has been abolished, and planned economy for the removal of poverty and inequality has been introduced, there is still a need for a radical change in our educational system and policies. We are yet to grasp the urgency of the problem, or even to experiment with this form of education. It is probably because we have been conditioned by years of colonialism and feudalism which has inhibited any rethinking of the role of education, and which is still dominated by vested interests.

There is a great need for adult schools to arouse the consciousness of the whole community. Methods of education which encourage free thinking, dialogue and discussion, to enable learners to form their own opinions, and to work for the betterment of the country, need to be introduced.

Education through the Mother-Tongue

The craze for education through the English medium, which has only increased class distinctions, needs to be curbed. Education through the mother tongue will help to remove caste prejudices and to knit the whole community together. Like those folk schools, our adults also need to be taught the importance of collective and co-operative action; they also need to be trained in leadership and helped to develop scientific attitudes. The urban areas can also have folk schools set up by trade unions in co-operation with adult education movements.

V.S. Mathur, President, Indian Adult Education Association (1983) in his Presidential address on the 200th birth anniversary of Severin Grundtvig and International Literacy Day, remarked that the Danish Folk High School Movement has not lost its vigours and strength over the past 100 years, and it is an eloquent tribute to the soundness of the idea which still continues to inspire all educationists. The Folk High School Movement seems significant as an educational technique of great merit which is also suitable for adoption in the

developing countries. Grundtvig's philosophy of folk or popular education has inspired a number of countries all over the world to initiate residential adult education. India has not remained unaffected by the idea. The Indian Adult Education Association appointed a national committee in 1983, comprising distinguished educationists to consider this idea of folk schools for India.

Adult Education in the USA

There is 90 per cent literacy in the United States, while in India it is still only 36 per cent, and both are big countries inhabited by many races. And both are practising democracies. It would be both interesting and instructive to examine some trends of adult education in the United States. Many state governments, voluntary, local and commercial bodies offer adult education for various purposes. In New York City, the major areas of adult education offered by the various categories of institutions are: (1) health, family relations, consumer buying, planned-parenthood, child-care, hygiene; (2) development of vocational, technical and professional competence in one's own or in a new occupation, and (3) dance, music, theatre, arts, literature and crafts.

In some places, for example the Mott Foundation Programme in Flint, Michigan, schools are designed both for children and adults with separate staff. Some credit programmes are offered to the regular undergraduate students in the separate 'down town' colleges *via* television or correspondence courses. Agricultural extension services, home economics and public affairs programmes are also worth noting, particularly for their relevance for India. The various university institutions and faculties mainly involved in life-long education help those who are already educated to keep in touch with developments in their respective fields. A beginning in this kind of education has been made in India also, but it is still in the rudimentary form.

Organization for Adult Education

The three organisations in the US, representing three forms of adult education are: (1) Laubach Literacy International

for Literacy Programmes, (2) the Board of Co-operative Educational Services (BOCS), and (3) Syracuse Cable System.

- * Laubach Literacy International for Literacy programmes besides being in North and Latin America, are also used in West Asian and African countries. They help people to acquire speaking, reading, writing and mathematical skills. These are non-profit educational organizations utilizing the services of voluntary teachers. Their methodology is adaptable to individual and cultural differences through the each-one-teach-one approach. They publish easy-to-read literature on topics of immediate interest for adults, such as English Series, Maths Series and weekly newspapers for the new readers. Some grants from the government are provided, but the major sources of income are voluntary contributions and sale of publications.

- * Some of the agencies of the Board of Co-operative Educational Services (BOCS) are Adult Continuing Education Division; Senior Citizens Organization; Educational Opportunities Centre; and Syracuse Employment and Training Agency. These agencies mostly aim at the development of occupational skills, which include acquisition of new job skills or upgrading existing skills. The areas are :

- * self improvement
- * creative use of leisure time
- * handyman skill and extra employment opportunities
- * general interest activities, such as home repairs, psychological testing, leather-craft, sewing, sports, etc.

Adult basic education programmes provide entry at any time to the learners. Skill training employment programmes have as areas of learning :

- * health care
- * electro-mechanical education
- * food service
- * accounting and clerical work
- * building maintenance

They also provide career guidance, academic help, job placement and personal guidance, including prevention of drug abuse and alcoholism. There are additional programmes for school districts to meet the special needs of the gifted and the talented.

- * The Syracuse Cable System offers 24-hour television programmes both for entertainment and information. The programmes could carry :

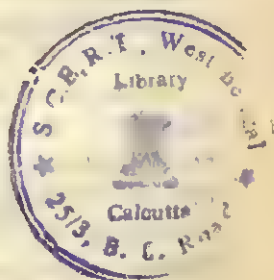
- * news—both general and local
- * stock prices
- * financial and commercial information
- * employment opportunities
- * short informative features
- * special programmes.

Obviously these type of educational programmes cannot be easily offered to the adults in India as the majority of them do not know how to read. Adult education in any country depends on the type of education that was available to them as children. The cultural diversity makes it virtually impossible to offer such educational programmes nation-wide through television in India. In the developing countries like India, the major aims of adult education, by and large, should be promotion of literacy, vocational and self-employment training rather than self-development through group, mass, or even individual approach.

Summary

The Danish residential 'Folk High Schools' offer great relevance to adult education in India. The major characteristics of these schools are voluntary education, use of mother tongue to impart education, gradual experience and education for the common man through responsibilities. Similar 'folk high schools' are found in the neighbouring countries of Denmark. Adult education in a highly developed country like the USA is offered through a network of many government,

voluntary, local and commercial bodies The programmes are for literacy, self-improvement and vocational skill training. The use of technology, e.g., TV broadcasts, help in adult education. India should select the mode of non-formal education keeping in view the resources and the cultural and socio-economic background.



LITERACY THROUGH NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Literacy programmes are now so widely offered for adults outside the school system, and are so greatly needed, that non-formal education (NFE) to many in India means nothing but literacy classes. Such a view truly reflects the hope that NFE alone can eradicate illiteracy from the country. Our non-formal education stream can, and must, take up this formidable task of bringing literacy and education to the people. Although literacy in India is gradually increasing, because of the continuing increase in population, the number of illiterates too keeps on multiplying.

Ram Reddy (1986) commented on illiteracy and expenditure on education in India :

The expenditure on education has increased from Rs 55 crores in 1947 to Rs 5,180 crores in 1982-83. Today [in 1986] the expenditure on education ranks next only to defence. Still we find that more than 60 per cent of the people are illiterate and less than five per cent of the population has access to higher education.

When there is such a large number of illiterates, it is imperative that our educational system—both formal and non-formal—should give first priority to the eradication of the evil of illiteracy. Many illiterates are adults, and are unemployed or under-employed; formal education remains beyond their reach. If all the illiterates are forced into primary schools to learn reading and writing, there will not

be enough schools for them, nor will there be enough teachers to teach them.

Considering the absolute inadequacy of formal education for eradicating illiteracy from the masses, NFE is the best, and probably the only strategy for bringing literacy to the people of India. The magnitude of the problem can be handled much more effectively by NFE than by formal education. The simplified methods of NFE for literacy training for the masses is, in fact, our only hope for the total removal of illiteracy and ignorance, and has already proved its worth to a limited extent.

Formal Education and Illiteracy

A characteristic of formal education today is that it can be imparted in a school classroom. Not only do we not have so many school buildings, we do not have even a single classroom for the illiterate adults in these schools. For NFE also, a classroom is needed, but it can be almost any room, anywhere, which can be used as a place for learners to sit. Of course, in our country, there are still many classrooms which are not worth the name, but even these are not adequate for the vast number of the illiterates. Today, literacy training can be imparted under a tree, or even in a courtyard, and no classroom as such is needed.

Formal education as full-time learning

Another feature of formal education is that one can learn only as a full-time learner who must belong to a certain age-group. This makes formal education inaccessible to those who cannot afford to go to a school as a full-time student because of economic and social constraints, and are thus compelled to forego even the barest education. Only those who are privileged, are able to enter the formal stream of education, but in India such people are just a minority. The majority of the people face such deprivation—both economic and social—that they and their children have to keep away from schools. And it is this salient majority, ignored by the formal education system, which must also be made literate and the literacy programmes must be devised on the basis of their

needs, of which they may not even be aware. Only the NFE has concerned itself with these people.

Literacy programmes through non-formal education

Even before 1975 when NFE was launched in a big way, several efforts were made by the government and other agencies to remove illiteracy. Some voluntary agencies, particularly some Christian missionary groups, made pioneering efforts to make children and adults literate, but they were not particularly successful because of the enormity of the problem and the severe economic and social constraints. Eradication of illiteracy was attempted through free and compulsory formal education. Mass Literacy Movement, Social Education and other schemes were introduced, but all showed poor results. In the 1970s NFE was widely suggested and illiteracy was then attacked through the non-formal approach. A major scheme was launched in 1975 to develop a large-scale programme of NFE for under-privileged children, youths and adults. These programmes were meant to be related to the needs and the aspirations of the learners and were to be based on local environmental conditions. This was an attempt to reach the deprived and the disadvantaged outside the formal system of education.

Kothari Commission and the NFE

The Education commission of 1964-66, set up by the Government of India, and popularly known as the Kothari Commission, recommended NFE on a large scale for out-of-school children and adults. The Commission also envisaged eradication of illiteracy by 1986. The target has not been achieved, for even in 1986 the literacy figures were only 30 to 40 per cent.

When more than 60 per cent of the people of India are still largely illiterate, the non-formal approach to education is much more suited for the education of the masses than the formal system of education. The non-formal approach also makes literacy drives more economical and yet faster, as compared to formal education. The mere vastness of the number of illiterates and the urgency to make them literate, makes it

necessary to expedite their literacy training. And when the non-formal methods are less expensive and still yield results faster, they are the real answer to our national problem of illiteracy.

Literacy figures

Table 1 gives the literacy figures for all the States of India based on the 1981 census. As can be seen, Kerala has the highest percentage of literacy—70.42 per cent—whereas Arunachal Pradesh has the lowest—20.79 per cent. A shocking revelation is the fall of literacy in figures for Gujarat. In 1971, literacy in Gujarat was 53.79 per cent but came down to 43.70 per cent in 1981—an astounding increase in the population of illiterates by 10.09 per cent! A large migration of educated people from Gujarat may be one of the reasons, though the correctness of the figure has also been questioned.

TABLE 1

Literacy Ranking of Indian States and Union Territories in 1981 Compared to 1971 (from States Profile 1985)

<i>Rank in 1981</i>	<i>Indian States and Union Territories</i>	<i>1981 Literacy Rate (per cent)</i>	<i>1971 Literacy Rate (per cent)</i>	<i>Rank in 1971</i>
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Kerala	70.42	60.42	2
2.	Chandigarh	64.79	61.56	1
3.	Delhi	61.54	56.61	3
4.	Mizoram	59.88	53.79	4
5.	Goa, Daman & Diu	56.66	44.75	6
6.	Pondicherry	55.85	46.02	5

(Contd.)

TABLE 1—(Contd.)

1	2	3	4	5
7.	Lakshadweep	55.07	43.66	7
8.	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	51.56	43.59	8
9.	Maharashtra	47.18	39.18	10
10.	Tamil Nadu	46.76	39.46	9
11.	Gujarat	43.70	53.79	11
12.	Nagaland	42.57	27.40	19
13.	Himachal Pradesh	42.48	31.96	15
14.	Tripura	42.12	30.98	17
15.	Manipur	41.35	32.91	14
16.	West Bengal	40.94	33.20	13
17.	Punjab	40.86	33.67	12
18.	Karnataka	38.40	31.52	16
19.	Haryana	36.14	26.89	20
20.	Orissa	34.23	26.18	21
21.	Meghalaya	34.08	29.49	18
22.	Sikkim	34.05	17.74	28
23.	Andhra Pradesh	29.94	24.57	22
24.	Madhya Pradesh	27.87	22.14	23
25.	Uttar Pradesh	27.16	21.70	24
26.	Jammu & Kashmir	26.67	18.58	27
27.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	26.66	14.97	29
28.	Bihar	26.20	19.94	25
29.	Rajasthan	24.38	19.07	26
30.	Arunachal Pradesh	20.79	11.29	30

The table excludes Assam as no census was held there in 1981.

Women's Attitudes Towards Literacy Programmes

The literacy rates for women are lower as compared to men both for 1971 and 1981. Quite likely, the same lower rate for women may be recorded in 1991 also. There is no reason why women cannot be literate to the same degree as men. If the reasons for this anomaly can be correctly established—as they are presumably known—suitable measures can be taken.

If women are to become literate, their motivation, facilities for education, the benefits they are likely to achieve and the encouragement most women need to educate themselves, are to be clearly understood by the literacy educators. Earlier, there was a mention about the desirable characteristics of non-formal educators (Chapter 8). These qualities of being committed and of being considerate and understanding could be very necessary in education for literacy also. The positive or negative attitude of women towards literacy programmes is one factor which can determine the success or failure of such programmes.

Attitude is a tendency to react in a certain way to a particular situation. In psychological terms, an attitude is defined as readiness and predisposition to act, in response to some stimulus. The actual action may not take place, but the person has a readiness, a wanting to do something in a particular way. More precisely, attitude is a positive or negative mental readiness for any psychological construct. A psychological construct is also called an object, which may be an idea, a slogan, a practice, or a person.

In reality, we see individuals having ideas, interests, motives, policies and convictions. So the attitudes are directed towards individuals, whereas the positive and negative attitudes should be developed towards the actions, practices, policies and motives of the individuals.

In the case of women, many of their attitudes have been formed on inadequate and incorrect information. Because women have been deprived of education and an active role in society for long, their attitudes tend to be negative, undesirable and even detrimental to their own interests. Women have been culturally conditioned to put themselves in a secondary and subservient position and role. Many educated women,

particularly the social and the political workers, are found to be predominantly conditioned by traditions and taboos. Such women unconsciously promote and advocate an attitude of *status quo* for women—a position which is definitely harmful to the cause of women. Hence, any study of women's attitudes, specially towards literacy programmes, can be expected to be negative and in need of a change in correct direction.

In a study by Seth and others, in 1983 in Delhi, it was found that women who took functional literacy training had a neutral attitude towards it. A slow change in attitude in the positive as well as the negative direction was also noted. Further, the attitudes seemed to be influenced by the type of occupation of the head of the family. Women's motivation to continue their literacy programme was not found related to the attitude. Although the subservient position of women can result in a negative attitude towards literacy, the 72 women of the study by Seth and others (1983) showed a neutral attitude towards literacy. This fact means that women accept literacy programmes but there is a wide margin to change their attitude to the positive side.

A sympathetic approach to women's efforts to become literate and special incentives to join literacy classes will enhance women's attitude towards education.

Women have a wrong notion that if they have not learnt as children, they cannot learn as adults also. Women also believe that they must go to the formal schools to become literate. Such notions contribute to a negative attitude towards literacy training. Therefore, the non-formal educators who have women illiterates in their centres, must try their best to communicate correct ideas about literacy for women. The few women who become literate are the best messengers for spreading true knowledge about literacy, and dispelling all the wrong notions about it. It is observed that a good rapport between the non-formal instructor and the women trainees is the way to change the women's attitude towards literacy. The pleasing and informal atmosphere of the non-formal class where women take literacy training, is closely associated with changing their attitudes in a positive direction. The place where literacy classes for

women are to be held should be clean, inviting and comfortable, so that female learners feel drawn to literacy. As the task of making women literate is gigantic, and the resources are limited, miraculous results cannot be expected. But, within limits, much can still be done.

The women who formed the subject of the study by Seth and others, were constantly reminded that if they become literate, they can take up tailoring as a vocation. Earning additional income or their own independent livelihood, is a much felt need of women, and literacy can help them to earn that much-needed income. Functional literacy is, therefore, accepted by women. If the genuine needs of women are met through literacy training, women will have a more positive attitude towards literacy. Women who have secured well-paid jobs after becoming literate, are themselves, an inspiration for illiterate women. As stated earlier, amongst the economically poor, the desire for increasing earnings is the greatest incentive for developing a positive attitude towards literacy. It is universally believed that literacy is the key for a better life. If it is so, literacy training will be sought by women too; if it is not so, the literacy programmes should be changed to make them more functional and purposeful.

When literacy training is being imparted, many may develop a negative attitude towards literacy even in the neighbourhood of the literacy class. For example, an unfinished literacy training may drive others away from literacy. Those who relapse into illiteracy also set a negative example for others. Because women have many limitations, they are the most likely dropouts from the literacy programmes.

The women who courageously join a literacy class should be treated with special consideration so that they can complete their training successfully, develop a positive attitude towards literacy and also set an example for others. In the context of social deprivation of women, women's literacy has more dangers, and yet, women's literacy should be given priority and special facilities. The literate and the educated women are the best examples to be emulated by other women.

Jobs and the neo-literate women

Follow-up activities for neo-literate women are important. In fact, neo-literate women must be employed; if after becoming literate, women are given jobs, there will be some incentive for the literacy training. On the contrary, some literates do not want the kind of low-paid jobs they held when they were illiterate and, quite understandably, seek better jobs. But if they do not find better jobs, these women blame the literacy training. For the success of literacy programmes for women, the government, business and industries must absorb the neo-literates in appropriate jobs. In other words, functional literacy denotes that literacy must be linked with gainful employment.

Literacy and women of low socio-economic status

By and large, women of the low socio-economic strata do not feel any need for literacy. They do not have the motivation to go in for functional literacy. The absence of any feeling for the need of literacy is, of course, due to social deprivation of women which is more pronounced in the lower socio-economic strata. This is, indeed, a vicious circle where one wonders whether poverty is because of illiteracy, or illiteracy keeps the people in poverty. The NFE can spread literacy and can, thus, lessen the extent of poverty if the literates can find better employment than the illiterates. For this, the agencies of NFE need the support and collaboration of the government, industry, employment bureaux, and even individual philanthropists who can provide jobs to the neo-literates.

Quota of Jobs

Just as the employing agencies have a quota of jobs for the handicapped, scheduled castes and tribes, there should also be a quota for neo-literate women. A literate woman could bring real material benefits to her family and can encourage her children and other womenfolk to go in for literacy, for a more decent living. Thus, literacy training for women is doubly desirable and necessary. In fact, literacy for a woman means literacy for the family.

Incentive for literacy

The government gives monetary incentives to men and women who go in for sterilization for limiting population growth. Such incentives, if given and received honestly, can genuinely boost the drive against over-population. Similarly, the women from low socio-economic strata could be given monetary incentives to go in for literacy. A thorough scrutiny of their state of literacy should be made before monetary incentives are given. The NFE stream requires a budget specially for creating motivation for literacy and education in the learners. Literacy training comprises a large segment of the non-formal stream. Incentives to women for literacy must be the first budgetary requirement of the non-formal stream.

Literacy and Development

The progress of a nation is dependent on two factors—literacy and economic development. As Mishra (1981) pointed out, the strategies of economic growth by themselves have not registered any impressive gains in improving the quality of life of the masses. In the poor countries, a new strategy is, therefore, required. Though the national income has a direct bearing on national progress, in India where ignorance is so widespread, more income and products cannot improve the condition of the masses. A national welfare programme is simultaneously needed. Where there are educated people, the increase in national income has improved the quality of life. The national educational level has, therefore, to be raised to improve the quality of life of the people. Unfortunately, in India we have to begin not only with compulsory primary education, but also with compulsory adult literacy. The level of education of a country is an indicator of its level of economic growth. Literacy is the starting point of the economic growth; mass education is now being advocated by the educationists and statesmen because the number of illiterates who are to be made literate is so huge. Piecemeal approaches have only yielded small results.

Literacy and education

Literacy, being just the ability to read and to write simple

sentences, is not equivalent to education. But for the illiterate adults, the first step towards education is literacy. Where literacy is functional, it has the potentiality of motivating people towards education. Functional literacy is the ability to read, write and count as a normal function in daily life. Basic arithmetic is a vital component of functional literacy for any person. A person requires both oral and written knowledge of elementary arithmetic for economic and social advancement. The benefits of modern science and technology cannot be grasped by the illiterates.

In India, though there are several scientists and technologists who have made signal contributions to science and technological advancement they are in a lamentably low minority as compared to the masses who still remain ignorant of scientific advancement. This wide gap between the educated and the illiterate is also the cause of social and political conflicts, dissatisfaction and mutual hostility among the people. India needs mass literacy not only for her economic development, but also for her social and political well-being.

Concept of Development

The concept of development is rather elusive and, therefore, easily misunderstood. Because literacy is the first requirement for the development of a nation, the relationship between literacy and development must be clearly understood. Development refers to qualitative and structural changes in the state of an economy. Growth, as compared to development, refers only to quantitative and tangible increase in the GNP (gross national product). Development refers to a relatively stable and long-range increase in real national income which is accompanied by a change in the attitudes of the people, their motivation, institutional set-ups and production techniques (Mishra 1981, p. 12).

The concept of development has, thus, both economic as well as non-economic components. Literacy is a part of the non-economic component, which refers to social, educational, ethnic and political aspects. The enrichment of these aspects is related to economic components. One component supplements and facilitates the other. The educational and

political backgrounds of people influence their economic growth. The economic and non-economic indicators of development are today realized for planning development at national, state, and district levels. Literacy is a basic aspect of non-economic development. Rao (1966) has described the various non-economic components for development as follows :

1. People must have knowledge and desire for better ways of living.
2. Readiness of the people to adopt new ways of production instead of traditional ones.
3. People must cultivate a commercial or an economic view of their professions.
4. People must develop positive attitudes toward education, knowledge, facts and methods, in relation to their daily living and occupation.
5. People must perceive not only the immediate gain and effect, but also the long-term, far-reaching advantages and disadvantages.

Without literacy none of these non-economic components can be cultivated by the people. They cannot benefit from science and technology unless they have educational, social and political awareness. Literacy is just the beginning of this awareness and knowledge. A literate person adds to his critical consciousness through reading the written words. All knowledge today is stored up as written and printed words, to which only the literate have an access. An illiterate person is at an incalculable disadvantage because when he is not even able to read, how can he reap the fruits of technological and scientific development or participate in the social and economic advancement of the country ? Illiteracy in the world today is a curse for any country, for it is retarding socio-economic advancement through denial of access to modern knowledge.

Literacy can reduce the gap between the rich and the poor by making the people more knowledgeable about the means of production and the ways of earning a better income. Literacy is the open door to knowledge and to a better

tomorrow. Literacy enables a person to know what he lacks, and to be more willing and eager for advancement. Illiterate persons are averse to any change and continue to cling to their outdated views which may even be harmful. Only the illiterate and the ignorant people persist in the belief that illness is due to divine wrath, while a farmer with some degree of literacy knows what fertilizers to use to increase crop production.

The very basis of modern technology—machines, appliances, and chemicals, to mention a few—are, in the last analysis, dependent on literacy and education. Illiteracy is obviously inconsistent with the spirit and demands of the scientific and technological age of our times. New ideas and practices cannot be effectively communicated to those who are impervious to these ideas because of literacy and lack of education. Illiteracy has a direct bearing upon stagnating socio-economic development.

Literacy Programmes by Voluntary Agencies

As has been repeatedly pointed out, illiteracy is so widespread in our country that the government alone will not be able to remove it. Some voluntary agencies, particularly those set up by the Christian missions, have been working actively for the removal of illiteracy much before the government became interested in general literacy. The one-teacher village schools operated by the christian missionaries as early as 1900 and continued till 1945, were the first schools in many villages to bring literacy to people. The Literacy House, established by a selfless Christian lady, near Lucknow is a pioneer institution of its type which has concerned itself solely with the removal of illiteracy and ignorance. The Literacy House is still continuing its good work.

After independence, the Government of India became seriously concerned with the magnitude of illiteracy in India. Many programmes were initiated and are functioning but the progress has been slow. Since education is a State subject, there have been no uniform developments of literacy in the various States.

Voluntary agencies

Voluntary agencies are groups of individuals associated

together for a common objective, of their own free will, independent of any pressure. They raise their own resources and act on their own initiative to serve the people, or the cause, without expecting any financial award from the government. But these agencies are generally for the public good, and receive some grant from the government, or raise their own funds. The bigger agencies, called foundations, have a huge operating budget and are exempted from taxes and duties by their governments. They, like the Ford Foundation, work on an international scale.

The small voluntary agencies work at local or district levels. Since they are close-knit, their work can be very effective. Some voluntary bodies come into existence at the time of catastrophies and disasters and work to raise funds and aid for the sufferers.

Unfortunately, many voluntary agencies have not viewed literacy as a standing disaster and have taken illiteracy for granted. The poor illiterates are simply considered 'unfortunate' and are ignored by them. Even those agencies which were aware of the problem kept themselves away on the score that education was the responsibility of the government. The result has been that illiteracy still continues to be with us as a national disgrace, like poverty.

The formal and the non-formal streams of education were originally started voluntarily, centuries ago. The government came into the picture much later. Today, when the government has the resources, and is alive to the problem, the voluntary bodies can join hands with the government to strive for the removal of illiteracy. The agencies can extend many kinds of help to the government in its drive against illiteracy. For example :

- * Production of books and readers for the literates and the neo-literates.
- * Training teachers specially for literacy work.
- * Providing library service.
- * Motivating voluntary literacy educators.
- * Organizing fund-raising activities.

- * Disseminating information about government programmes.
- * Conducting action research about various aspects of literacy.

As Reddy (1985) wrote, voluntary agencies being the projection of popular initiative and enthusiasm, can have much closer rapport with the people as compared to official bodies. In fact, the government must work through the voluntary agencies to build up goodwill with the people and to benefit from their experience.

Government and the voluntary agencies

In 1961, the Ministry of Education (called Human Resources Development since 1986) started a scheme of assistance to voluntary agencies working in the field of adult education. In 1982, the scheme was revised in the light of the 20-point programme. Under this scheme, the grant is given by the government on the basis of programme cost—75 per cent of the administrative cost, while 25 per cent will have to be borne by the voluntary agencies. There are other conditions also.

Voluntary agencies exist only in 17 States and four Union Territories, as of 1985. Many of these agencies are covered under the scheme, though about 367 are not yet aided under the scheme by the government. The agencies which are aided by the government, provide literacy training for adults. Considering the resources of the voluntary agencies, it is possible that they can contribute significantly to the eradication of illiteracy by 1990.

Funds for women's literacy

A national appeal for funds for eradicating illiteracy among women was released in New Delhi on 29 April 1986, by the great social worker, Smt. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya. The All-India Committee on Eradication of Illiteracy among Women, on whose behalf the appeal was released, will assist women's organizations with funds in their efforts to eradicate illiteracy among women. Nine women's organizations have come together to form the All-India Committee for

Eradication of Illiteracy among Women; these organizations are :

1. All-India Women's Conference
2. Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust
3. Centre for Women's Development Studies
4. National Council of Women in India
5. Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh
6. Young Women's Christian Association of India
7. National Federation of Indian Women
8. Indian Federation of University Women's Association
9. Indian Association for Women's Studies.

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Functional Literacy

As early as 1965, the World Congress of Ministers of Education redefined the concept of literacy. They stated that literacy is not merely an ability to read and write. Rather than an end in itself, literacy should be regarded as a way of preparing women and men for a better fulfilment of their social, civic and economic roles. The aim of literacy training is beyond reading-writing skills, which is to make people more efficient in their daily life and work. This is the central idea of functional literacy. Only a functionally literate person can contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

UNESCO and Functional Literacy

With the idea of functional literacy as defined by the World Congress of Education Ministers, the Experimental World Literacy Programme was carried out by Unesco between 1967 and 1973 (Mishra, 1981). The objective of this programme was not to remove illiteracy, but to test and demonstrate the economic returns of literacy. India has been trying to make her literacy programme more functional by relating it to the life and work of the people. The changes in political leadership and policies have caused setbacks to literacy programmes. The non-formal stream has been given less attention than the formal one. But if illiteracy is to be

eradicated, an all-out effort from every angle has to be launched and continuously sustained.

Literacy and agriculture

As is well known, approximately 70 per cent of the population of India is engaged in agriculture, and about 50 per cent of the national income is derived from the agricultural sector. It is necessary to integrate literacy training with agriculture. Making people literate so that they become aware of their needs regarding agricultural development is the most obvious approach to this end. Patnaik has the following comments to make about functional literacy and agriculture :

It may well be argued that the success of the 'Green Revolution' did not envisage functional literacy as a precondition to adoption of improved agricultural practices. It may even be possible to bypass literacy initially in communicating improved techniques and methods to farmers. It has to be appreciated, however, that in order to promote rapid adoption of new technologies and transfer of skills, a very high degree of literacy would be an essential pre-requisite. Keeping in view the occupational interests and needs of the learning clientele, it would, therefore, be essential that literacy lessons be interwoven with relevant development programmes. (Patnaik, 1986, p. 30).

The adult literacy programmes cannot be given in isolation. The adults are engaged in the task of maintaining families and earning their livelihood. The literacy programmes must be functional so as to help the adults perform those two tasks with greater efficiency. Integration of adult literacy with extension services, such as Krishi Vigyan Kendras, National Demonstration Centres, Operational Research Projects, and Farm Radio Broadcasts (Patnaik, 1986) can be more successful if used for functional literacy. These programmes require functional literacy associated with their objectives. The literacy component must be an important part of all rural development schemes. The other such integrated multipurpose programmes are : Integrated Child Rural Development Services

(ICRDS), and development of Women and Children in Rural Area (DWCRA), among others.

Industrial workers and literacy

Besides the rural masses, there are the industrial and commercial employees and workers, who also need literacy training for their betterment. For example, office peons and laboratory attendants must be able to read simple circulars, notices, school and college time-tables and titles of books and periodicals. They should also be able to take down simple telephonic messages. Such employees should be made functionally literate within a prescribed time-limit. The employing agencies, such as universities, banks, and offices, must take the lead in promoting functional literacy among their employees.

Example of Cuba

Patnaik (1966) cites Cuba as a unique example of the success of functional literacy through involving all development agencies in adult literacy. At every work-site, industrial establishment, co-operative farm and mine, an adult education centre is organized by the concerned management as a part of its normal activity. The Cuban Ministry of Education only provides technical support and conducts examinations.

For promoting functional literacy, the business and industries sectors must contribute a portion of their profits for the literacy programmes of their workers and employees. If they operate functional literacy programmes themselves, it will be better for the employees who will find it convenient. Those who become literate can be given incentives or awards by the management.

Functional literacy for the artisans

The third group of illiterates who need functional literacy is the group of craftsmen and artisans who are engaged in traditional handicrafts. The carpet weavers of Kashmir Valley, the brass workers of Moradabad, U.P., *kashikari* (blue pottery) workers of Jaipur, bidri and enamel workers of Hyderabad, Sankheda wood-painters of Gujarat, Madhubani

painters of Bihar, fireworks and matchbox makers of Sivakasi (mostly women and children), and many others also need functional literacy. Functional literacy for them would mean not only improvement in the quality of their art through improved technology, but also a stop to their exploitation by rapacious employers. The improvements in the quality of their crafts and awareness of how they are being exploited will result not only in better sales of their goods but will also improve their economic and social status, and will give the feedback to maintain their literacy status.

Mass Movement for Adult Literacy

The slow, direction-less and piecemeal movement for eradication of adult illiteracy has led to setbacks to many efforts. However, there is rethinking on how the mass movement for literacy can be activated and what are the reasons that are holding up its progress. The new idea of mass movement for adult literacy is based on three experiences (Parikh, 1986) :

- * The slow and the tardy manner of making adults literate, does not create a sense of involvement among people.
- * The literacy programmes do not stimulate the adult learners because the programmes do not have environmental support.
- * Involvement of grass-root voluntary agencies and educational institutions is very marginal.

The mass movement for literacy, though non-formal in nature, has to be activated with the greatest vigour. Any mass movement needs a large number of activists and workers to ensure its success. For the success of the mass movement for literacy, the involvement of students and teachers of the formal education system has been suggested, as they can be made available in large numbers. It could even be a novel educational experience for them. The regular classes and laboratory work of students and teachers need not be missed. The formal education could be restructured to include the literacy movement. In India, there is a tendency to foist every

responsibility on students and teachers. But they cannot remove adult illiteracy on their own, without necessary infrastructure and proper direction. The necessary infrastructure has to be created first. Apart from a full-time co-ordinator and clerical help, the other requisites would be literacy literature, storage racks for such materials, and a vehicle. There would also be running expenditure. The teachers and students cannot provide all these facilities on their own.

As early as 1965, the Government of India had become aware of the importance of mass literacy, because agricultural production and family-welfare are both dependent on literacy. Although the non-formal stream of literacy training has been accepted in principle, it has received only marginal consideration so far. However, the revised 20-point programme and the new educational policies, introduced in 1986 have placed great emphasis on non-formal education for making the people literate.

Summary

Studies show that although the expenditure on education has increased from Rs 55 crores in 1947 to Rs 5,180 crores (in 1982-83), more than 60 per cent of the population is still illiterate, and only five per cent have access to higher education. Formal education for such a large number is out of question because of the staggering cost. Non-formal education, thus, is the only hope for the eradication of illiteracy. Despite significant improvement, there remains much disparity in the rate of literacy between the different States of India—Kerala (70.42 per cent) has the highest literacy rate, while Arunachal Pradesh (20.79 per cent) has the lowest. Education of women, because of many factors, has suffered the most. Many efforts were made by non-formal agencies, particularly the Christian missionaries, to bring literacy to the common people but the efforts were not very successful, as the poor people did not even feel the need for literacy.

The Government of India became interested in the advancement of literacy education after independence and some steps were taken to introduce adult education. But the progress

had been slow and tardy. With growing awareness that economic and social development are linked to literacy and education, the drive for literacy has received a fresh impetus. It has also been realized that what is needed is not just literacy—the ability to read and write—but *functional literacy*—application of literacy training for the betterment of life, for which a co-ordinated drive by both official and non-official agencies would be needed. The revised 20-point programme places special emphasis on functional, non-formal education for the removal of illiteracy.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

India lives in its villages. According to the 1981 census, the population of India has reached 685 million, of which only 36.28 per cent are literate. Region-wise, the literates constitute 60.2 per cent in urban areas, and only 27.9 per cent in rural areas. Of the literates, the female population constitutes just 22.88 per cent. Apart from low literacy and large population, the disparity between male and female literacy is particularly glaring. The nexus between poverty, over-population and illiteracy has long been obvious. As lack of education is at the root of poverty and un-checked population growth, illiteracy has to be eradicated as the first priority. But formal education has its limitations; it cannot bring literacy to such an immense population through schools and colleges.

Formal education still remains beyond the reach of most of the people in rural areas, for various reasons. The contribution of formal education towards raising the socio-economic status of the poor in the villages is virtually negligible. But non-formal education (NFE) because of its direct approach to persons of any age-group, has the potentiality of bringing literacy to the people and to awaken them to a better life. Non-formal education can be the answer, and the only answer, to the problems of rural illiteracy, population-explosion, abject poverty and ignorance. It can, if properly implemented, usher in a new era of rural development with less investment, and the objectives can be realized sooner.

Rural Development

The concept of rural development requires some explaining. According to UNESCO, rural development is a process through which a series of quantitative and qualitative changes are brought about in rural areas for improved living conditions. The rural development in India is expected through the initiative of external change-agents and outside resources, with the mutual involvement of the rural population. The external forces or resources, can be useful to the extent of people's participation and, thus, rural development is a people's programme.

Reddy (1985) has explained that people cannot be developed, but they can develop themselves by participating in co-operative activities and decision-making processes. Left to themselves, the need for self-realization is not even felt by the rural people. A change-agent helps them to recognize their needs as well as the possibility to improve their life. Rural development obviously means improving the standard of rural living, removing exploitation, working for social justice and cultivating self-reliance in the rural people. Rural development is a process which continues to operate to bring about an increasingly better way of living.

Integrated rural development

Some of the programmes for rural development in India are integrated programmes. The Rural Development Service, Farmers' Functional Literacy Programme, National Rural Employment Programme and others, are examples of integrated rural development. Integrated rural development seeks to develop all aspects of the rural communities in an integrated way. It does not start with goods and commodities; it starts with people's needs, concerns and desires. The needs, concerns and desires can be achieved through education and gainful employment. The people's participation can make the community develop. Initially, the support of an outside agency is required but if the roles of external agencies and the people of the village are not reversed, the village just stagnates and becomes a parasite. The external agency should phase out when villagers are sufficiently advanced

educationally and economically to carry on, on their own. If the outside agencies continue to make all the decisions for the villagers and retain all authority for running the village organizations, the villagers will only become apathetic and lose interest in their development.

In a true democracy, every villager has a right to have a say in his own affairs and to participate in the decision-making in the affairs of his village through the *panchayat*. There are other rights and obligations too, for example the right to education and the obligation to work for the common welfare. Rural development can be seen when all these are implemented. The livelihood of the rural people is derived from two main areas : (1) agriculture, and (2) activities related to agriculture, or what can be termed para-agriculture. Some of the para-agricultural activities are : spinning and weaving, dairy farming, poultry, animal husbandry, rural crafts and iron-smithy. Integrated rural development means a coordinated and simultaneous development of all these.

Integrated approach to rural development

Integrated rural development is achieved through self-reliance, self-effort, and full accountability. It aims at the elimination of rural poverty and creates conditions for greater participation of the rural under-privileged in the economic, social, and political life of the community. The problems of rural people are inter-related. The villagers cannot have education and health services indefinitely without acquiring the skills for productivity to pay for these services. Also, they cannot have higher productivity without acquiring knowledge of the ways of increasing productivity.

Contents of the programme

Rural development, through the integrated approach, must include certain productive programmes with opportunities for better employment. Some educationists argue that education is for the development of the mind and soul, and education for employment is a very narrow interpretation of the term. But they fail to grasp that there can be no development of the mind and soul when the body is starved of food and

nourishment. Employment for the rural under-privileged is a top priority objective. Secondly, employment by itself can raise the socio-economic status of the people in the face of uncontrolled population growth, which has assumed the form of an explosion—the population explosion—which continues to swallow up all the gains of development, particularly in rural areas. Therefore, population growth must be controlled through planned Parenthood, or family planning. All programmes for integrated rural development must include functional literacy with instructions for planned Parenthood.

Rural development, in an integrated way, means the education of the rural under-privileged for employment, and control of the growth of population through planned families. If these two factors—employment for the poor and small families—are achieved, several other benefits will follow automatically. Rural co-operatives, specially women's co-operatives, rural crafts and rural industries are all means of generating employment and improving the conditions. But essentially, a small family and employment are the key to personal and social welfare and happiness.

It is quite likely that corruption too can be removed if poverty is removed, and poverty can be removed if the population is reduced.

Shortcomings in rural development programmes

Rural Development programmes, as observations show, have concentrated on the programmes for providing basic amenities and services. But unless the rural people have the income to pay for the amenities and services, they are most likely to lose them, for these cannot be provided indefinitely on a subsidized basis. Subsidizing would be a great strain on the resources of the government, which will only increase taxes to pay for these amenities. Again, this would mean taking from 'the haves for the sake of the have-nots'. Therefore, rural development should aim at increasing the earning capacity of the rural masses instead of a subsidized living which is no real solution of rural poverty: for apart from the cost of subsidy, it will only make the people idle, lethargic and

unwilling to do any productive work if continued for a long time.

Non-formal education and rural development

Non-formal education can meet many aspects of rural development. In fact, all education is for the development and the elevation of life. As about 75 per cent of the rural population is still illiterate, NFE has a much greater role in rural development than formal education. Where the bulk of the rural population is illiterate, rural development can be greatly expedited through NFE of functional value for all men and women, of all age-groups. The functional education programmes can be divided into three types :

- * Literacy programmes for non-school-going children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.
- * Vocational education, family-welfare education and literacy programmes for youths in the age-group of 15 to 25 years.
- * Functional literacy for job improvement and self-employment programmes for adults in the age-group of 26 years and above.

NEF for the 6 to 14 year age-group

Literacy programmes for children of six to fourteen years are important for the children of this age-group to enter adulthood as literates. But the rural under-privileged view the children of this age-group as a source of supplementary earning. Though the non-formal education is provided free, the parents of these children often do not allow them to receive it. According to their parents, if the children of this age-group go to schools or literacy classes, they would not be sharing in household work, resulting in greater burden on their parents, apart from the loss of whatever meagre income the children bring to their homes.

Free or subsidized NFE has not kept the unprivileged children of 6 to 14 years in the non-formal stream. There can be another method, though it would be costly, of educating these children. The poor parents could be reimbursed for any

loss or inconvenience suffered by them for letting their children pursue non-formal education. While the NFE would be absolutely free, the parents must also receive a monthly income equivalent to what a child would earn, or let the parents earn, by taking over the responsibility of house-keeping and child-care.

Though such a plan would obviously be expensive, it is worth trying out, at least for a reasonable length of time. The literacy programme will be the starting point of the NFE for six to 14-year-old children. It must then cover as many contents as possible in comparison to primary and middle school levels. The courses and their requirements need not be like the formal school system, though the broad objectives can be similar. Moral development, health and physical training, instructions in the 'three Rs and vocational aptitude should form the contents of the non-formal programmes.

Only when the reimbursement to the parents has been decided, and NFE is made absolutely free, the next step—who will teach these children—can be taken up. Several educationists, have suggested that undergraduate students can do this work. The undergraduate students can surely take up the NFE of these six to 14-year-old children of poor parents, but only when the following provisions are made :

- * Every college, or a large college department, must be given a vehicle, a driver and an attendant for taking the student-teachers and teaching materials, to the village schools and bringing them back.
- * Each village must have one NFE organizer who stays in the village to locate teaching sites and to initiate, support and monitor NFE in villages. The curricula of the student-teachers should be re-organized to include this teaching work, which should be counted as a part of their own regular course of studies.
- * The NFE imparted by undergraduate students should be considered as work with theory and field work, and should be assessed for marks or credits like other subjects.
- * The NFE organiser should be in contact with the village

NFE teacher who will be teaching and supervizing the undergraduate students for NFE work.

- * The undergraduate students associated with non-formal teaching should be provided with literacy readers, teaching aids and non-formal record ledgers or journals, by the university, or the government, or the agency that is sponsoring the NFE of six to 14-year-old children, in the villages.

The other modalities of this group's education would have to be decided by some standing committee of experts selected by the funding agencies. There would have to be a suitable place for teaching the non-formal learners. The classes should not be held in a dilapidated and crumbling building which may prove a hazard to the students; what is needed is a neat and clean covered area, with toilet facilities. The teaching materials must be for the level of non-formal learners and the teaching programmes should be characterized by activities to be carried out by the learners, rather than by teacher-centred methods.

NFE for the 15 to 25 years age group

The emphasis for the 15 to 25 years age-groups will be on vocational training, family-welfare education and literacy, if the learners are illiterates or semi-literates. The vocational training can be somewhat like a polytechnic training. The young learners of both sexes must have opportunities to learn some employable skill. Agriculture, handicrafts, rural trades and village industries as are commonly prevalent in rural areas, can be taught in these polytechnics. Depending upon local resources, the rural polytechnics can develop local industries and trades, like dairy farming, bamboo-work, basketry, etc., which are likely to have a ready market.

Family-welfare education

The NFE for the age group of 15 to 25 years must include family-welfare education. Family-welfare education should also include child-care, nutrition, education, population education, apart from methods of birth control, all suitably adapted for

the rural non-formal learners. Such courses should be taught with examples from rural life to make the learners use what they learn. The teaching materials must also have a rural bias. Considering the population which constitute this age-group, and the different languages they speak, educating them is going to be a gigantic challenge. These are the rural adults who, without exception, need to practise family-planning. Otherwise, they would just be increasing the population of a country which is already over-populated.

The practice of giving incentives to adults for practising birth control, is already being followed in some States. As the men are the decision-makers—though they do not seem to be applying their minds to the number of children their family should have, with the result that the population continues to grow unchecked—they should be motivated through monetary incentives, or tax relief, to follow family-planning. This should be a part of their education.

Literacy programmes

The programmes for bringing literacy to this age-group would be at many different levels. There may be purely literacy classes, or promotional activities for neo-literates, or functional literacy programmes. All literacy training would have to be for rural use. This age-group would also need economic independence, which can be met by slanting their NFE towards village industries and crafts. The majority of rural illiterates are in the age-group of 15 to 25 years, and their NFE could also form a part of the university extension programmes. This age-group is normally engaged in some occupation or profession and they need to improve their professional or occupational competencies. New ways, new techniques and new approaches are to be taught to this age-group.

Because the persons of the 15 to 25 years age-group are likely to be employed, they can be easily trained to contribute to small-scale, cottage industries or para-agricultural industries. With their skills, such an arrangement would not only increase their personal income, but also help the villages to prosper. They can play an important role in rural

development. They can be awakened socially, economically and politically. Because of these reasons, they have different educational needs also. Their needs may be of the 'basic three R's' as well as of job improvement. Non-formal programmes limited to literacy only do not attract their attention, even if they are illiterate. Also, rural development programmes cannot work in isolation. These should have a close relation to the family and the community, as well as with other ongoing programmes.

The NFE of the 15 to 25 years age-group for rural development must be :

- * Functionally relevant to the rural needs and interests of the community.
- * Linked with the social and economic inputs in a rural or an adjacent urban community.

This implies that NFE should be adopted to the schemes of social change and economic development. This may be better explained by saying that there should be an educational component in the economic and the social schemes. All the schemes like drinking-water supply, irrigation, rural housing, family planning, small-scale industries and several others, contain an educational component.

Because the economic needs are so prominent, this age-group must first be helped to improve their economic status. There is a stigma attached to adults learning the three R's, or at least, adults have a negative attitude to learning reading and writing. This attitude can be diluted if NFE starts with economic benefits for the rural under-privileged youths.

NFE for the age-group of 26 years and above

Persons beyond the age of 26 are generally stable in their jobs or business, and their family responsibilities. But they are also most stress-prone because of economic uncertainties. The most difficult and the most crucial NFE, is the education of these adults. To integrate the NFE of this age-group with rural development would mean rural jobs and occupations, which can be developed on the required scale only by the

non-formal stream of education and training. As stated for the earlier group, this would mean integrating jobs and occupations with literacy programmes.

The various rural development programmes must be co-ordinated with literacy training. The marginal farmers and agricultural labour projects, the rural industries projects, the rural artisan programmes, and others, will either have to begin or end with literacy training as part of the total scheme. The non-formal curriculum for rural adults could be conceptualized on the basis of the following aspects :

- * Orientation to a rural development scheme, its economic benefits to rural adults, the functioning and the requirements to be met by adults.
- * Understanding of social, economic, political and technological changes affecting rural life; possibility of improving rural life through such changes; need to have knowledge and skills to use these changes for economic benefits.
- * Understanding of family-planning, nutrition and child-care.
- * Reading, writing and arithmetic as functionally related to rural jobs and occupations.
- * Development of reading and debating groups and cultural programmes for boys and girls, men and women.
- * Social workers' groups to work against drinking, untouchability, superstition, dowry, child marriage and other social evils.
- * People's courts, or *Lok adalats*.

Rural development can be construed as a strategy for the emancipation of the rural under-privileged from all the many evils and social and economic deprivations to which they are subject. The schemes for rural development are often mismanaged, and the benefits of rural development hardly reach the rural under-privileged. These rural under-privileged and the down-trodden are so ignorant that they cannot even grasp the value and purpose of the development programmes. Even the newspapers are full of news of corruption and

malpractices in implementing the schemes for rural development. That is why we do not see the results of rural development in proportion to the money, labour and time spent on them.

Change agents

Officials of the government or of the voluntary organizations, or other bodies, must be qualified to impart NFE to the people with whom they are to deal. But qualifications by themselves are not sufficient for the work. Past experience has shown that the persons engaged to do the actual rural development work do not have the required qualifications though they have the will and dedication. These workers, who, in the context of rural development, are called change agents, must have qualifications and mental attitude appropriate for rural development work. These qualifications, which go beyond academic degrees or diplomas, and which should form the basis of selection of the change agents, are briefly listed as follows :

- * Ability to lead, initiate and innovate changes in rural life.
- * Capacity to get along with, and to enthuse, the rural people.
- * Knowledge of non-formal approaches to rural development.
- * High degree of integrity, honesty, fairness and objectivity.
- * Sensitivity, empathy and consideration for poor and ignorant people.
- * Dedication to the cause of rural development and commitment to work with missionary zeal for the cause.

The teachers and the persons responsible for the execution of the non-formal programmes for education are important change agents, and they can accomplish much if they are sincere and dedicated, but often their sincerity and dedication are doubtful. They may be academically well-qualified, but qualifications as such are of no avail if dedication and commitment are lacking.

Mahatma Gandhi is one single example of what can be achieved through dedicated work and devotion to a cause. He always said that he was an average person, with less than average abilities, yet he has done more for rural development and village uplift than any other person. Non-formal education for rural development has been incorporated in many schemes, projects and plans for the uplift of the people living in villages. Huge funds are also set apart for rural upliftment by governments of the States, by universities and philanthropic agencies, under qualified workers, but dedication, sincerity, and commitment are sadly lacking.

Summary

Rural development is a process of qualitative and quantitative changes to improve conditions in rural regions. Such a process needs to be an integrated programme where all aspects of rural communities are developed. The rural unprivileged must receive NFE essentially to become literate and employable in better jobs. The non-formal stream of education can be divided for three age-groups of men and women : (1) literacy for non-school-going children of six to 14 years, (2) vocational education and family welfare programmes for youths of 15 to 25 years, and (3) functional literacy, job-improvement and self-employment programmes for adults of 26 years and above.

Participation of college students in NFE for rural development is possible, but only when they are provided with transport and teaching aids, and when a village-based organizer initiates and monitors the programmes, and when the college curriculum is moulded to include rural NFE as a regular course.

The NFE workers for rural development must possess the qualities of leadership, sociability and subject-matter competence. But more important are the zeal, dedication, honesty and integrity of the NFE workers.

APPENDIX—A

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE/CHECK-LIST FOR COMMUNITY SURVEY

Direction :

Dear friend,

The Non-Formal Education centre has decided to offer a non-formal education programme to members of various communities of our city. We would like to develop a programme based on your needs and interests.

*Please, check against the responses applicable to you.

**Please give answers to questions asked.

A. Background information

1. What is your home address ?

2. Are you married _____ unmarried _____.

3. What kind of family do you belong to ?

Joint _____ Nuclear _____.

4. What is the composition of your family ?

(Answer by putting mark \checkmark in an appropriate column).

a. What is the total number of your children ?

1. _____, 2. _____, 3. _____, 4. _____.

5. — More than 5 _____

* Instruction for literate group.

** Instruction for illiterate group.

b. Which age group do you belong to ?

Age	Female	Male	Age	No. of boys	No. of girls
19-25	—	—	1-50	—	—
26-35	—	—	6-10	—	—
36-45	—	—	11-15	—	—
Above 46	—	—	16-18	—	—

5. What is your total family income per month ?

Less than Rs. 300 _____

Rs. 301—600 _____

Rs. 601—900 _____

Rs. 901—1200 _____

Rs. 1201—1500 _____

6. What is your status of education ?

Education	Yours	Head of the Family
Illiterate		
Up to Primary		
Up to Secondary		
Up to Graduation		
Any other		

7. What is your religion ?

Hindu _____ Muslim _____

Christian _____ Jain _____

Any other _____

8. Are you : vegetarian _____ non-vegetarian _____

9. Which of the following languages, can you understand well ?

Gujarati _____ Hindi _____
Marathi _____ English _____
Any other _____

10. Have you ever attended NFE classes before ?

Yes _____ No _____

11. If yes, state for how many years _____

12. On which of the following days, will you be free to attend the NFE classes ?

Monday _____ Tuesday _____
Wednesday _____ Thursday _____
Friday _____ Saturday _____

13. What would be the free time for you to attend the NFE class ?

(a) 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. _____ (b) 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. _____
(c) 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. _____ (d) Any other _____

14. How much would you like to spend, approximately, for the useful articles to be made in these classes ?

Rs. 2 to 5 _____ Rs. 13 to 15 _____
Rs. 6 to 8 _____ Above Rs. 15 _____
Rs. 9 to 12 _____

- B. 1. How do you spend your leisure time ?

A list of suitable leisure time activities should be given in this section. (Learners may check against those which they usually engage in) :

Example :

1. Stitching _____

2. Embroidery _____
3. Reading _____
4. Income generating activities _____
5. Any other _____

2. Which of the following would you like to learn to make ;
(Here a list of likely things that an instructor can teach
should be given).

Example :

- (a) sari petticoat _____
- (b) sago vada _____
- (c) stuffed toys _____
- (d) children's garments _____
- (e) asan, a small mat used for sitting on the floor.

- C. Which of the following problems do you face often ?
(List of problems related to the group should be given
in this section).

Example :

- (a) Not knowing how to raise income of the family.
- (b) Improving health status of children.
- (c) Fulfilling the needs of the family members within
limited income.
- (d) Dealing with children's illnesses.
- (e) Developing good habits in children.
- (f) Lack of sewing skill.
- (g) Lack of understanding regarding insurances, banking
and installment buying.

- D In this section, the instructor may list the things to be
observed in the community either by himself or by inter-
viewing a community leader. Such as :

1. Occupational breakdown.

2. Age structure.
3. Major possessions—such as house, vehicle, equipment.
4. Employment opportunities—such as big or small scale industries, cottage industries.
5. Social welfare agencies.
6. Facilities in the community :
 - (i) Educational
 - (ii) Recreational
 - (iii) Health
 - (iv) Transportation
 - (v) Market.

APPENDIX B

RATING SCALE OF DEMONSTRATION

Directions :

This rating scale describes two extreme ends of a 5-point scale. The five points are :

1 = very poor

4 = above average

2 = poor

5 = excellent.

3 = average

Respond to the items of rating scale by circling one number on this continuum. There may be some items not applicable to your demonstration.

1. Topic

Not suitable for the group. Outdated, not interesting.

1 2 3 4 5

Novel, interesting and suitable for the group; involves new skills and techniques.

2. Room Arrangement

Inconvenient for demonstrator and audience; audience could hardly see the demonstration.

1 2 3 4 5

Convenient for demonstrator and audience; audience can have a full view of demonstration.

3. Equipment

Poorly selected; not placed properly; some equipment unnecessary.

1 2 3 4 5

Well selected and placed; necessary equipment, in good working condition.

- | | | |
|---|-----------|---|
| 4. Lesson plan | | |
| Poorly written, incomplete. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Complete, well written; Includes all steps of lesson planning. |
| 5. Introduction | | |
| Not to the point; too long or too short. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Short, appealing, explaining the topic; informal design. |
| 6. Knowledge of subject matter | | |
| Not up-to-date, unable to answer questions, inadequate information. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Up-to-date, adequate information; questions answered satisfactorily. |
| 7. Technique and method | | |
| Poor, lacking skill. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Correct, methods shown skillfully. |
| 8. Participation of learners | | |
| Not sought; discouraged participation. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Planned well and encouraged learners participation. |
| 9. Working Habits | | |
| Poor cleanliness. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Very particular about cleanliness throughout the demonstration. |
| 10. Summary | | |
| No summary; abrupt ending. | 1 2 3 4 5 | Summarized main points; provided for question-answer session to clarify doubts. |

11. Time

Too much over or under time.	1	2	3	4	5	Finished on time.
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12. Product

Poor and not up to standard.	1	2	3	4	5	Standard products.
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13. Display of product

Not neat; poorly displayed.	1	2	3	4	5	Neat and attractively shown.
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14. Explanation

Steps explained poorly; no examples; main points not emphasized.	1	2	3	4	5	Each step explained well, with examples; stressed important points and central idea.
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

15. Speech

Speaks unclearly; too fast or slow; monotonous voice.	1	2	3	4	5	Clear and well modulated voice with appropriate speed.
---	---	---	---	---	---	--

16. Language

Not appropriate for the group; hardly anyone could understand; poor terminology.	1	2	3	4	5	Appropriate for the group; proper terminology, good quality.
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

17. Teaching aids

Very poorly selected and made; not used when needed.	1	2	3	4	5	Well prepared, suitable to the topic and group
--	---	---	---	---	---	--

18. Appearance

Neglects personal grooming; loose hair; apron not worn.	1 2 3 4 5	Attends to personal grooming; apron worn; hair tied neatly.
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19. Confidence

Shows lack of confidence and ease.	1 2 3 4 5	Meets the group relaxed, confident.
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20. Purpose

Not accomplished.	1 2 3 4 5	Accomplished
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APPENDIX—C

RATING SCALE FOR TALK

Directions :

This rating scale has five points. These are :

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1 = very poor | 4 = above average |
| 2 = poor | 5 = excellent. |
| 3 = average | |

Respond to the scale by circling one number on this continuum.

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1. Topic | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (a) Novel | |
| (b) Interesting | |
| (c) Thought promoting | |
| (d) Appropriate for the group | |
| 2. Introduction | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (a) Informal | |
| (b) Attention seeking | |
| (c) Orienting the group about the topic | |
| 3. Language | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (a) Good terminology | |
| (b) Understood by the group | |
| 4. Organization of the content | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| (a) Logical sequence | |
| (b) Emphasizes central idea | |
| (b) Leads to conclusion | |

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5. Knowledge of subject matter | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Up to-date | | | | | |
| (b) Adequate | | | | | |
| (c) No dependence on notes | | | | | |
| (d) Questions answered satisfactorily | | | | | |
| 6. Confidence | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Relaxed and at ease | | | | | |
| (b) Casual yet alert | | | | | |
| 7. Eye contact | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Looks at all the members | | | | | |
| 8. Teaching aids | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Well prepared | | | | | |
| (b) Suitable to the (a) topic | | | | | |
| (b) group | | | | | |
| (c) In good physical condition | | | | | |
| 9. Speech | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Clear | | | | | |
| (b) Well modulated voice | | | | | |
| (c) Shows enthusiasm | | | | | |
| 10. Appearance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Well groomed | | | | | |
| 11. Summary | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (a) Main points covered | | | | | |
| (b) Question-answer session to clarify doubts | | | | | |

APPENDIX—D

RATING SCALE FOR WORKSHOP

This rating scale has five points. These are :

- 1 = very poor
2 = poor
3 = average
4 = above average
5 = excellent

Respond to the scale by circling one number on this continuum. There may be some items not applicable to your workshop.

1. Topic

- (a) Suitable to the group
(b) Interesting
(c) Useful

- | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2. Members informed previously about | | | | | |

- (a) The purpose of workshop
- (b) Things to be brought
- (c) Preparations to be done.

- 3. Equipment**
- (a) Planned _____ 1 2 3 4 S

- (a) Planned and kept ready
(b) In good working condition

4. Explanation

- (a) Stepwise
- (b) Clear
- (c) Understood by learners

APPENDIX—E

RATING SCALE FOR OVERALL EVALUATION

Directions :

Respond to the given check-list by putting tickmark (✓) in the column or against the answer applicable to you.

1. How did you find the following classes ?

<i>Type of class</i>	<i>Interesting</i>	<i>Useful</i>
Demonstration; example : Bread roll, Paper flowers		
Workshop Example : Sari blouse Jute bag		
Talk; Example : Balanced diet, Child care		

2. What is your opinion about the suitability of :

<i>Item</i>	<i>Suitable</i>
1. Place of classes	
2. Time	
3. Days for classes	
4. Seating arrangement in classes	

3. What is your opinion about the cost of the following articles ?

<i>Article</i>	<i>More than what I could afford</i>	<i>Just what I could afford</i>	<i>Less than what I could afford</i>
Name of articles prepared in :			
(a) workshop classes			
(b) demonstration classes			

4. Could you understand the language used by your instructor ?

Yes _____ No _____

5. Did you get the information regarding the programme well in advance ?

(a) All the time _____

(b) Sometimes _____

(c) Never _____

6. How did you find the NFE instructor ?

She/he was :

(a) Friendly, sympathetic, understanding.

(b) Interested as long as classes were concerned.

(c) Very aloof.

7. Could you attend all the classes ?

Yes _____ No _____

8. If no, the reasons were :

- (a) No previous information regarding the programme.
- (b) Did not find classes interesting.
- (c) Guests at home.
- (d) Had gone out of station.
- (e) Did not find the classes useful.
- (f) Sickness in the family _____
- (g) Knew everything that was being taught _____.

9. Would you like to attend NFE classes, again in future ?

Yes _____ No _____

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NON-FORMAL EDUCATION: An Alternative Approach

—R.P. Singh

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The present volume presents a comprehensive coverage of Non-Formal Education in India. Details of the scheme in operation in the country have been provided for a better understanding of it even as its foundations have been explained for appreciating its *raison d'etre*. The chapter on International Experiences provides a wider perspective of NFE because India shares the information available elsewhere. To what extent our approach is different from or similar to Non-Formal Education in other countries has to be explained and understood because exact replicas of even the best of schemes are not easy to make. India has moved into the right direction but the plea made in the preface underlines the need to make it even more responsive to the country's social requirements. Some day, the author hopes, NFE will become a truly alternative system to formal education. On that day India will have really entered the 21st century with adequate means to meet the challenge of the future.

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